Course Design Rubric - OEI

In order for a course to be offered as a part of the Online Education Initiative (OEI), it must meet established standards relating to course design, instruction, and accessibility that are intended to promote a quality learning environment that conforms to existing regulations. Prior to the submission of a course for OEI consideration, it is helpful for the faculty member to review these guidelines and conduct a self-evaluation. The outcome of this self-evaluation is a component of the OEI Course Application process.

The Course Design Rubric for the Online Education Initiative consists of 4 components:

- o **A. Course Design** - Course Design addresses elements of instructional design. For the purpose of this program, course design includes such elements as structure of the course, learning objectives, organization of content, and instructional strategies.
- o **B. Interaction and Collaboration** - Interaction and Collaboration can take many forms. These criteria place emphasis on the type and amount of interaction and collaboration within an online environment. "Interaction" denotes communication between and among learners and instructors, synchronously or asynchronously. "Collaboration" is a subset of interaction and refers specifically to those activities in which groups are working interdependently toward a shared result. This differs from group activities that can be completed by students working independently of one another and then combining the results, much as one would when assembling a jigsaw puzzle with parts of the puzzle worked out separately then assembled together. A learning community is defined here as the sense of belonging to a group, rather than each student perceiving himself/herself studying independently.
- o **C. Assessment** - Assessment focuses on instructional activities designed to measure progress towards learning outcomes, provide feedback to students and instructor, and/or enable grade assignment. This section addresses the quality and type of student assessments within the course.
- o **D. Learner Support** - Learner Support addresses the support resources made available to students taking the course. Such resources may be accessible within or external to the course environment. Specifically, learner support resources address a variety of student services.

Approved by Online Education Initiative Steering Committee for use during the OEI pilot on August 15, 2014.

This rubric is designed to inform the work of reviewers for courses being taught in connection with the California Community College Online Education Initiative. It

is informed by the National Standards for Quality Online Courses by the International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL).

For each sub-category (within the main categories of **Course Design**, **Interaction and Collaboration**, **Assessment**, and **Learner Support**), a weighting value (from .5 to 3) has been assigned to indicate the relative importance of that sub-category. The weighting value appears in parentheses next to each sub-category title. For example, the first sub-category for Course Design will now say Goals and Objectives (x3).

Reviewers will assign a numeric score (from 0-6) for each sub-category within the major categories. The numeric scores align with the levels of mastery as follows:
- Exemplary (5-6)
- Accomplished (3-4)
- Promising (2)
- Incomplete (1)
- Not Evident (0)

It is common for a course to vary in its level of accomplishment across all items within a single sub-category. For example a course might be very strong in "Content Presentation: Navigation is intuitive", but somewhat less strong in "Content Presentation: Content is enhanced with visual and auditory elements", both within the same sub-category of "Content Presentation." In these cases, the higher score (6 for Exemplary and 4 for Accomplished) should be reserved for courses that are strong across all items in the sub-category. The lower scores (5 for Exemplary and 3 for Accomplished) should be used in cases where most, but not all, of the items in the sub-category are strong.

For a course to be approved for delivery as an OEI consortium course the following criteria must be met:
- A minimum score of 3 (Accomplished) in each sub-category
- A minimum weighted score of 40 for the Course Design category
- A minimum weighted score of 32 for the Interaction and Collaboration category
- A minimum weighted score of 28 for the Assessment category
- A minimum weighted score of 20 for the Learner Support category
- Inclusion of a component with content related to the Online Education Initiative

When it is deemed appropriate, the instructional design team will help a candidate course meet the requirements for accessibility, the OEI component, and other instructional design issues as we can.

A. Course Design

Sub-category (weight)	Exemplary (5-6)	Accomplished (3-4)	Promising 2	Incomplete 1
A-1. Goals and Objectives (x3)	• Goals and objectives are easily located within the course • Goals and objectives are clearly written at the appropriate level and reflect desired outcomes • Goals and objectives are written in measurable outcomes (students know what they are expected to be able to do) • Goals and objectives are made available in a variety of areas in the course (within the syllabus and each individual learning unit or module)	• Goals and objectives are located within the course syllabus or the individual learning units • Objectives are written to reflect desired learning outcomes, although not all are written as measurable outcomes • Students have some understanding of what is expected of them	• Goals and objectives are not easily located within the course • Goals and objective are not clearly written in measurable learning outcomes • Students may be unsure of what they are expected to be able to do • The level does not match the desired outcomes	• Goals and objectives are not easily located within the course • Some are missing and others poorly written • The level does not match the desired learning outcomes
Score and notes				
If there is no evidence provided to support a sub-category, a numeric score of 0 should be assigned that represents the "Not Evident" level of mastery.				

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Sub-category (weight)	Exemplary (5-6)	Accomplished (3-4)	Promising 2	Incomplete 1
A-2. Content Presentation (x3)	- Content is made available or "chunked" in manageable segments (i.e., presented in distinct learning units or modules) - Navigation is intuitive - Content flows in a logical progression - Content is presented using a variety of appropriate mechanisms (content modules, single pages, links to external resources, etc.) - Multimedia elements, if present, are well integrated with other course materials	- Content is made available or "chunked" in manageable segments - Navigation is somewhat intuitive, but some exploring is required to determine the flow of content - Content is presented using a variety of mechanisms (content modules, single pages, links to external resources, RSS Feeds, print material) - Multimedia elements, if present, are integrated with other course materials	- Some content segments are overly large (or possibly too small) for the specified objectives - Navigation is only occasionally intuitive, thus the flow of content is sometimes not easily determined - The design does not avail of the content presentation tools (content modules, single pages, links) - Multimedia elements, if present, are poorly integrated with other course materials	- Content is not "chunked" into manageable segments; - Navigation is not intuitive and the flow of content is unclear - The design does not avail of the content presentation tools (content modules, single pages, links) - Multimedia elements, if present, are not integrated with other course materials
Score and notes				
Sub-	Exemplary (5-6)	Accomplished (3-4)	Promising 2	Incomplete 1

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category (weight)				
A-3. Learner Engagement (x3)	• It is clear how the instructional strategies will enable students to reach course goals and objectives • Course design includes guidance for learners to work with content in meaningful ways • Individualized instruction, remedial activities, or resources for advanced learning activities, such as integrated publisher resources, are provided	• Instructional strategies are designed to help students to reach course goals and objectives, although this relationship may not be obvious to learners • Guidance is provided, but could be improved with greater detail or depth • Differentiated instruction (such as remediation) may be available on a limited basis	• It is not clear how the instructional strategies will help learners achieve course goals and objectives • Guidance in using content materials may only be provided on a limited basis • Differentiated instructional opportunities are not provided, although there may be supplementary content resources available	• Instructional strategies do not provide students with skills needed to achieve course goals and objectives • Content is provided but it is not clear what students are expected to do with it • No supplementary resources or activities are provided for remediation or advanced study
Score and notes				

If there is no evidence provided to support a sub-category, a numeric score of 0 should be assigned that represents the "Not Evident" level of mastery.

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Sub-category (weight)	Exemplary (5-6)	Accomplished (3-4)	Promising 2	Incomplete 1
A-4. Technology Use (x1)	• Tools available within the CMS are used to facilitate learning by engaging students with course content • CMS tools are used to reduce the labor-intensity of learning (e.g., providing links to needed resources where they will be used in the course, integrating publisher resources that are tailored to the course materials, and providing streamlined access to supplementary materials) • Technologies are used creatively in ways that transcend traditional, teacher-centered instruction • A wide variety of delivery media are incorporated into the course	• Tools available within the CMS could be utilized more (or more creatively) to engage learners with course content • CMS tools are made available to assist students, but could be organized or arranged for even greater usefulness • Technologies within the course are used in many cases merely to replicate traditional face-to-face instruction • There is some variety in the tools used to deliver instruction	• Tools available within the CMS are not used to their full extent or not used when it would be appropriate to do so • Only a few of the available tools within the CMS are used in a way that streamlines access to materials and activities for students • Technologies within the CMS are used primarily by instructors and not students • There is little variety in use of technologies within the CMS	• Technologies used within the CMS do not engage students with learning • Tools that could reduce the labor- intensity of online instruction are not utilized • Students are not expected to use technologies available within the CMS • Only a few technologies available within the CMS are used
Score and notes				

B. Interaction and Collaboration

Sub-category (weight)	Exemplary (5-6)	Accomplished (3-4)	Promising 2	Incomplete 1
B-1. Communication Strategies (x3)	• There are plentiful opportunities for synchronous and/or asynchronous interaction, as appropriate • Asynchronous communication strategies promote critical reflection or other higher order thinking aligned with learning objectives • Synchronous communication activities benefit from real-time interactions and facilitate "rapid response" communication (i.e., students gain practice discussing course content extemporaneously without looking up basic, declarative information)	• Several communication activities (synchronous and/or asynchronous interaction, as appropriate) are included to reinforce the desired learning outcomes • Asynchronous communications sometimes require reflection or other higher order thinking • Synchronous interactions are meaningful but may not take full advantage of the real-time presence of instructor and/or peers	• Communication strategies (synchronous and/or asynchronous interaction) are included, however, they may not consistently reinforce desired learning outcomes • Asynchronous communications are focused primarily on lower levels of thinking (e.g., summarizing, describing, interpreting, etc.) • Synchronous interactions are used mostly for instructor explanation or clarification of content, or other instructor-focused activities	• Little to no attention has been devoted to communication strategies • Interaction activities that are included do not invoke critical thinking, reinforce learning, or take advantage of the specific strengths of the communication tools used

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Score and notes				
Sub-category (weight)	**Exemplary (5-6)**	**Accomplished (3-4)**	**Promising 2**	**Incomplete 1**
B-2. Development of Learning Community (x3)	• Instructors have a plan for initiating contact prior to or at the beginning of class and at regular intervals during the course duration • Communication activities are designed to help build a sense of community among learners • Student-to-student interactions are required as part of the course Students are encouraged to initiate communication with the instructor • Collaboration activities (if included) reinforce course content and learning outcomes, while building workplace-useful skills such as teamwork, cooperation, negotiation, and consensus-building	• Communication activities may help learners build a sense of community, but do not appear to be designed with this in mind • Some student-to-student interaction is built into the course • Students interact with the instructor, although primarily as a result of instructor-initiated contact • Collaboration activities (if included) support some team-building skills, but may not purposefully integrate these elements	• Effort has been devoted to fostering a sense of community in the course, but only minimally. • More focus is needed on designing activities and a course climate that foster student-to-student interactions as well as student-to-instructor interactions.	• Little to no attention has been devoted to building a sense of community in this course.
Score and notes				

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Sub-category (weight)	Exemplary (5-6)	Accomplished (3-4)	Promising 2	Incomplete 1
B-3. Interaction Logistics (x2)	• Guidelines explaining required levels of participation (i.e., quantity of interactions) are provided • Expectations regarding the quality of communications (e.g., what constitutes a "good" answer) are clearly defined • A rubric or equivalent grading document is included to explain how participation will be evaluated • The instructor actively participates in communication activities, including providing feedback to students • The instructor regularly uses communication tools to provide course updates, reminders, special announcements, etc.	• Expectations of student participation in communication activities are given, but would benefit from more detail • Expectations regarding the quality of communications are included, but may be sketchy and lack detail or illustrative examples • Minimal information may be provided regarding grading criteria for communications activities • The instructor is occasionally involved in communication activities • The instructor sometimes takes advantage of CMS tools to post announcements, reminders, etc.	• Instructor expectations of student interactions are not made clear • Little information is provided regarding what constitutes a "good" response or posting • Students are not given a clear set of criteria for how communications activities will be graded • The instructor appears to be largely absent from communication activities • Few announcements, reminders, or other updates are provided	• Few or no guidelines are provided to students regarding the desired quantity or quality of communications/ interactions within the course • The instructor does not participate in communications activities with students
Score and notes				

C. Assessment

Sub-category (weight)	Exemplary (5-6)	Accomplished (3-4)	Promising 2	Incomplete 1
C-1. Expectations (x3)	• Assessments match the goals & objectives • Learners are directed to the appropriate objective(s) for each assessment • Rubrics or descriptive criteria for desired outcomes are provided (models of "good work" may be shown, for example) • Instructions are written clearly and with sufficient detail to ensure understanding	• Assessments match the goals & objectives • Rubrics or descriptive criteria for desired outcomes are included for some assessment activities • Instructions are written clearly, with some detail included	• Students are assessed on the topics described in the course goals and objectives • There may be some explanation of how assessments will be scored/ graded Instructions lack detail that would help students understand how to complete the activities	• Assessments bear little resemblance to goals & objectives • Expectations or grading criteria are not provided • Instructions are limited or absent
Score and notes				

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Sub-category (weight)	Exemplary (5-6)	Accomplished (3-4)	Promising 2	Incomplete 1
C-2. Assessment Design (x3)	• Assessments appear to measure the performance they claim to measure (e.g., activities are explained using appropriate reading level and vocabulary) • Higher order thinking is required (e.g., analysis, problem-solving, etc.) • Assessments are designed to mimic authentic environments to facilitate transfer • Assessment activities occur frequently throughout the duration of the course, and the instructor provides meaningful feedback in a timely manner • Multiple types of assessments are used (research project, objective test, discussions, etc.)	• Assessment activities have face validity (i.e., they appear to match the curriculum) • Some activities involve higher order thinking • Assessment activities may focus on tasks similar to real-world application of skills • Multiple assessments are included; at least three different types of assessments are used	• It is not clear whether the assessment activities actually measure the desired skill • The vast majority of assessments require only low-level thinking (memorization, for example) • Assessment activities typically do not include tasks that are relevant beyond the scope of this course; multiple assessments are included • Two types of assessments are included, at a minimum	• Assessment activities appear to lack validity due to bias, lack of clarity in questions or tasks, or because students are evaluated on performance unrelated to the stated objectives • No higher-order thinking skills are required to complete assessment activities • There is little or no evidence of authenticity built into assessments • Assessments are too few and far apart for the course content
Score and notes				

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Sub-category (weight)	Exemplary (5-6)	Accomplished (3-4)	Promising 2	Incomplete 1
C-3. Self-assessment (x1)	• Many opportunities for self-assessment are provided; • Self-assessments provide constructive, meaningful feedback	• Some self-assessment activities are included • Self-assessments provide feedback to learners	• There may be self-assessment activities, but they are limited in scope and do not offer useful feedback	• A few self-assessments may be included, but they offer little more feedback than flash cards
Score and notes				

If there is no evidence provided to support a sub-category, a numeric score of 0 should be assigned that represents the "Not Evident" level of mastery.

D. Learner Support

Sub-category (weight)	Exemplary (5-6)	Accomplished (3-4)	Promising 2	Incomplete 1
D-1. Orientation to Course and CMS (x.5)	• Clearly labeled tutorial materials that explain how to navigate the CMS and the specific course are included • Tutorials are found easily (few clicks) whether internal or external to the course, with easy return to other areas of the course • Tutorial materials support multiple learning modalities: audio, visual, and text based	• Clearly labeled tutorial materials that explain how to navigate the CMS and the specific course are included • Tutorials may not be easily accessed, or require the learner to leave course site without an easy return • Tutorial materials support multiple learning modalities: audio, visual, and text based	• Tutorial materials that explain how to navigate the CMS and/or the specific course may be evident, but not easily found • Materials do not support multiple learning modalities and are text- based only	• Tutorial materials explaining how to navigate the CMS or the specific course may be included but are difficult to find, lack detail, are not well organized, or are incomplete • Tutorial materials that are included do not support learning modalities
Score and notes				

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Sub-category (weight)	Exemplary (5-6)	Accomplished (3-4)	Promising 2	Incomplete 1
D-2. Supportive Software (If required - it is permissible to award this criterion a 6 if the course does not require software beyond the CMS and browser) (x.5)	• Clear explanations of optional and/or required software including any additional costs are provided within the course • Software required to use course materials is listed with links to where it can be captured and installed • Links are located within the course where learners will use the software (i.e., near the materials requiring its use)	• Clear explanations of optional and/or required software (in addition to the CMS) are provided within the course • Software required to use course materials is listed but links to where it can be captured and installed are not found near where it will be used	• Software (in addition to the CMS) required to use course materials is mentioned, but not explained • Links to where it can be captured and installed are provided, although they may not be conveniently located	• The need for additional software required to use course materials may be mentioned • Links to software may be missing or incomplete
Score and notes				

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Sub-category (weight)	Exemplary (5-6)	Accomplished (3-4)	Promising 2	Incomplete 1
D-3. Instructor Role and Information (x1)	• Contact information for the instructor is easy to find and includes multiple forms of communication (e.g., e-mail, phone, chat, etc.) • Expected response time for email replies (or other communication tool) is included • The instructor's role within the course is explained (e.g., whether he/ she will respond to "tech support" type questions) • The instructor's methods of collecting and returning work are clearly explained	• Contact information for the instructor is included but may not be easy to find; contact information includes more than one type of communication tool • Expected response time for email replies may be included • Instructor's role within the course is not clearly spelled out to students • The instructor's methods of collecting and returning work are clearly explained	• Contact information for the instructor is provided but not easy to find • Contact information includes only one way to reach the instructor • Information concerning response time for email replies is not included • Little or no information is given regarding the instructor's role in the course • The instructor's methods of collecting and returning work are evident but not clearly explained	• Contact information for the instructor is sketchy, at best • Lacks information concerning response time for email replies • Information regarding the instructor's role in the course is not included • Instructor's methods of collecting and returning work are confusing or non-existent
Score and notes				

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Sub-category (weight)	Exemplary (5-6)	Accomplished (3-4)	Promising 2	Incomplete 1
D-4. Course/ Institutional Policies & Support (x.5)	• Software used for the course is adequately supported by the institution, including information for students on where they can obtain help • All activities that might create educational records (as defined by FERPA) or that involve regular effective contact are conducted within district- or college-supported systems • Links to institutional policies, materials, and forms relevant for learner success (e.g., plagiarism policies) are clearly labeled and easy to find • Links allow easy navigation from the course to the information and back • Course/instructor policies regarding decorum, behavior, and	• Links to institutional policies, materials, and forms relevant for learner success (e.g., plagiarism policies) are included but may require searching to find • Links allow easy navigation from the course to the information and back • Course/instructor policies regarding decorum, behavior, and netiquette are included and are written clearly to avoid confusion • Links to institutional services such as the library, writing center, or financial aid office may be included but require searching to find	• Links to some institutional policies, materials, and forms relevant for learner success (e.g., plagiarism policies) are included but are difficult to find • Course/instructor policies regarding decorum, behavior, and netiquette are included but are not clearly written or would benefit from more detail • A few links to institutional services such as the library, writing center, or financial aid	• Links to some institutional policies, materials, and forms relevant for learner success (e.g., plagiarism policies) are not included • Some course/instructor policies regarding decorum, behavior, and netiquette may be included but are not clearly written or would benefit from more detail • Links to institutional services such as the library, writing center, or financial aid

	netiquette are easy to find and written clearly to avoid confusion • Links to institutional services such as the library, or writing center, are clearly labeled and easy to find		office may be included but require searching to find	office are not included
Score and notes				

If there is no evidence provided to support a sub-category, a numeric score of 0 should be assigned that represents the "Not Evident" level of mastery.

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Sub-category (weight)	Exemplary (5-6)	Accomplished (3-4)	Promising 2	Incomplete 1
D-5. Technical Accessibility Issues (x.5)	• Course materials are compliant with Section 508 and WCAG 2.0 (AA) and can be effectively used with equal ease by all students • All non-text communications technologies support multiple digital channels with automatic provision of alternate media accommodations in real time • Course materials are HTML-based and employ formatting styles to create semantic structure that facilitates consistent meaning and sequencing across all digital media types • All instructional materials can be opened via free and accessible programs or applications, and links are provided for students to download the application with supporting information on how to use the program or application • Quiz and assessment activities can be completed with equal ease via the keyboard and assistive technologies without adding cognitive load, and provide individual student-based	• Course materials are compliant with Section 508 and WCAG 2.0 (AA) • All non-text communications technologies support multiple digital channels for the provision of alternate media accommodations in real time. • Course materials employ formatting styles to create semantic structure that allows for consistent meaning and sequencing across all digital media types. • All instructional materials can be opened via free and accessible programs or applications. • All assessment	• Course materials fail to meet all Section 508 and WCAG 2.0 (AA) criteria completely. • Some non-text communications technologies support limited means for the provision of alternate media accommodations. • Course materials employ some formatting styles to create semantic structure but fail to provide reliable and consistent meaning and sequencing across all digital media types. • Most instructional materials can be opened via free	• Course materials are significantly non-compliant with Section 508 and WCAG or add cognitive load via inadequate accessibility supports. • Non-text communications technologies do not support multiple digital channels for the provision of alternate media accommodations • Course materials do not employ formatting styles to create semantic structure, nor consistent meaning and sequencing

	parameters for time, number of attempts, feedback, and completion	activities can be completed with equal ease via the keyboard and assistive technologies without adding cognitive load.	and accessible programs or applications. • Most quiz and assessment activities can be completed with equal ease via the keyboard and assistive technologies without adding cognitive load.	across digital media types. • Instructional materials use proprietary and inaccessible media formats. • Quiz and assessment activities can not be completed with the keyboard or assistive technologies, and/or extra cognitive load is introduced through inadequate accessibility supports.
Score and notes				

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Sub-category	Exemplary (5-6)	Accomplished (3-4)	Promising 2	Incomplete 1
D-6. Accommodations for Disabilities (x1)	• There are no pedagogically-essential learning activities or instructional media that are inherently inaccessible, or in the presence of such inaccessible materials, a DSPS approved plan for accommodation is in place and ready to be provided as necessary for each inaccessible learning activity or instructional media. • Course CMS settings are configurable by faculty to allow individual student-based accommodations to be provided within the CMS. • Links to CMS technical support as well as contact information for DSPS support are consistently provided and easy to find, and accompanied by a module within the CMS explaining how to request services or report a problem • An instructional material inventory of any inherently inaccessible learning objects is provided, and referenced to the	• There are no pedagogically-essential learning activities or instructional media that are inherently inaccessible, or in the presence of such inaccessible materials, faculty and DSPS have agreed to work with OEI to formulate an acceptable plan of accommodation for each inaccessible learning activity or instructional media. • Course CMS settings can be configured in a timely manner (24 hours) by faculty and/or the CMS System Administrator to allow student accommodations to be provided within the CMS, or alternate plans for	• There are pedagogically-essential learning activities or instructional media that might be inherently inaccessible, but a deeper assessment of the course and institutional resources is required to determine the ability to support accommodations. • Some of the CMS settings can be configured by faculty or CMS System Administrator to allow student accommodations	• There may be learning activities or instructional media that are inherently inaccessible, or there is no DSPS approved plan for accommodation. • CMS settings cannot be configured to allow student accommodations to be provided within the CMS. • CMS settings are not configurable to allow for student accommodations

	accompanying course outline with plans for accommodating students with disabilities for each inaccessible learning object or activity	accommodation have been created and approved by DSPS. • Links to CMS technical support and DSPS support are provided, and easy to find • An instructional material inventory of any inherently inaccessible learning objects is provided, along with some potential accommodations for each learning object or activity	to be provided within the CMS. • CMS technical support is provided, or a link to DSPS department web page, but not always easy to find • An instructional material inventory of any inherently inaccessible learning objects is provided	• No link to technical support or DSPS department is provided • Inherently inaccessible learning objects have not been identified, and no accommodations have been conceived or approved
Score and notes				

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Sub-category	Exemplary (5-6)	Accomplished (3-4)	Promising 2	Incomplete 1
D-7. Feedback (x1)	• Learners have the opportunity to give feedback to the instructor regarding course design and course content both during course delivery and after course completion • Feedback mechanisms allow students to participate anonymously in course evaluation	• Learners have the opportunity to give feedback to the instructor regarding course design and/or course content, but only after course completion • Feedback mechanisms allow students to participate anonymously in course evaluation	• Learners have the opportunity to give feedback to the instructor regarding course design or course content, but only after course completion • Feedback mechanisms do not guarantee privacy to the student	• Learners do not have the opportunity to give feedback to the instructor regarding course design or course content • Feedback mechanisms do not guarantee privacy to the student
Score and notes				

If there is no evidence provided to support a sub-category, a numeric score of 0 should be assigned that represents the "Not Evident" level of mastery.