Online Course Development Guide

Course Number: ___________________

Course Title: __________________________________________
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I. COURSE OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION

The overall design of the course, navigational information, as well as course, instructor, and student information are made transparent to the student at the beginning of the course.

**Standard I.1:** There is a statement welcoming the student to the course.

Annotation: What's the idea?
Place a statement that welcomes and introduces students to the course.

Examples:
- A course “tour”.
- Clear directions about how to get started in the course.

**Standard I.2:** The course provides complete syllabus information.

Annotation: What's the idea?
Provide the following:
- Directions for use of tools that you used, such as dropbox, discussion, quizzes, surveys.
- Testing procedures (online, proctored, timed, untimed).
- Other typical syllabus information (some of this is addressed elsewhere in the rubric).

**Standard I.3:** Course layout, as designed by you, is easy to navigate and understand.

Annotation: What's the idea?
Ensure the length and format of material is easy to read and online-friendly.

Examples:
- Pertinent content title links.
- Not an excessive amount of scrolling required.

**Standard I.4:** Expectations regarding academic honesty, including plagiarism concerns, are clearly stated in your course syllabus.

Annotation: What's the idea?
At a minimum, the following statement must appear on the course syllabus:
Charges of academic misconduct will be brought to the attention of the student and disciplinary actions will be taken. See the Central Lakes College Student Handbook, Academic Policies, for further details.
I. COURSE OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION – cont.

Standard I.5: Netiquette guidelines for the course, including etiquette regarding discussions and email communications, are clearly stated.

Annotation: What’s the idea?
Expectations of student conduct online should be clearly stated, however brief or elaborate they may be. The expectations themselves should not be evaluated.

Consider explanations of:
- Rules of conduct for participating in the discussion board.
- Rules of conduct for email content
- “Speaking style” requirements, i.e. use correct English as opposed to net acronyms
- Spelling and grammar expectations, if any.

Standard I.6: Your introduction by the instructor is available and appropriate.

Annotation: What’s the idea?
The initial introduction should help to create a sense of connection between you (the instructor) and the students. It should present you as not only professional, but approachable as well. It should, also, go beyond essentials, such as your name, title, field of expertise, and email address. It might include information on your teaching philosophy, past experiences with teaching online classes, personal information such as hobbies, a photograph.

Examples located in the CLC Faculty Lounge (xyz location).

Standard I.7: Students are requested to introduce themselves to the class.

Annotation: What’s the idea?
The student introduction helps to create a supportive learning environment and a sense of community.

Request students to introduce themselves and include instructions on where and how they should do so. Note: Student introductions themselves should not be evaluated.

As an instructor, you may ask students to answer specific questions (such as why they are taking the course, what concerns they have, what they expect to learn, etc.) or you may choose to let the student decide. Also, consider providing an example of an introduction and/or start the process by introducing yourself.

A good D2L tool to utilize for this activity is the User Profile. Each student can fill in their own information to their discretion. (Note: When a profile is filled out within a course, this information will display on all of their courses under ‘User Profile’.)
II. LEARNING COMPETENCIES

Learning competencies should be clearly defined and explained. They should assist the learner to focus on learning objectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard II.1: The posted competencies of the course include the competencies in the approved course outline. Any additional competencies used are observable, measurable, and achievable.</th>
<th>Complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annotation:</strong> What's the idea?</td>
<td>Notes/Questions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All competencies from the approved course outline must be present on the syllabus of the course being reviewed.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard II.2: Instructions to students on how to meet the learning objectives are adequate, clearly written, and easy to understand.</th>
<th>Complete</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annotation:</strong> What's the idea?</td>
<td>Notes/Questions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions may take various forms (e.g. narratives, bulleted lists, charts) and may appear at different levels within the course, such as module-based or weekly assignment sheets. Instructions should be clear and complete.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard 11.3: Learning activities are relevant to course competencies.</th>
<th>Complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annotation:</strong> What's the idea?</td>
<td>Notes/Questions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This may be a bit difficult to assess depending on the discipline, but if a learning activity sticks out as being unrelated to anything the course competencies detail, you may need to re-evaluate the value of the activity.</td>
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</table>
III. ASSESSMENT AND MEASUREMENT

Assessment strategies are established ways to measure effective learning, assess learner progress by reference to stated objectives, and are designed as essential to the learning process.

**Standards III.1:** Multiple methods of assessment measure the achievement of stated course competencies and learning objectives.

**Annotation:** What’s the idea?
Example that DOES meet the standard: Students are required to write papers, interact with others through electronic discussions, take quizzes, etc.

Example that does NOT: Students are required to take tests and no other method of assessment is utilized.

**Standard III.2:** The grading policy is easy to locate and understand.

**Annotation:** What’s the idea?
The grading policy needs to be easy to locate and access. Language used to describe how course activities are graded and how the final grade is calculated, should be easy to understand. Your policy on late work should be clearly articulated.

**Standard III.3:** Assessment and measurement strategies provide appropriate feedback to the learner.

**Annotation:** What’s the idea?
Students learn more effectively if they receive frequent, meaningful, and rapid feedback. This feedback may come from you directly, from assignments and assessments that have feedback built into them, or even from other students.

Examples:
- Instructor utilization of feedback tools (dropbox, quiz, discussion, gradebook).
- Writing assignments that require submission of a draft for your comment and suggestions for improvement.
- Self-mastery tests and quizzes that include informative feedback with each answer choice.
- Interactive games and simulation that have feedback built in.
III. ASSESSMENT AND MEASUREMENT – cont.

**Standard III.4:** Assignment due dates are clear and easy-to-find. □ Complete

Annotation: What's the idea?
Are students able to find the due dates for their assignments?

Examples:
- Discussion dates
- Weekly schedule
- Exam dates
- Use of calendar
- Assignments

**Standard III.5:** The types of assessments selected are appropriate for the distance learning environment. □ Complete

Annotation: What's the idea?
In most online courses, the types of assessments used are appropriate for the online environment. Assume that the course meets the standard unless you find evidence to the contrary.

Examples that DO meet the standard:
- Submission of files by email or dropbox
- Exams given in a proctored testing center
- Quizzes with time limits and printing disabled
- Multiple assessments which enable you to become familiar with individual students’ work and which discourage “proxy cheating” (someone other than the student completing and submitting work)

Example that does NOT meet the standard:
- A course in which the entire set of assessments consists of 5 multiple choice tests taken online, with no enforced time limit and the print function enabled.

**Standard III.6:** The gradebook tool or alternative communication method is utilized so that students may monitor their course progress. □ Complete

Annotation: What's the idea?
Are students able to view their assignment/quiz grades at any time and monitor their course progress?

Notes/Questions:
### III. ASSESSMENT AND MEASUREMENT – cont.

**Standard III.7:** The methods used for submitting assessments are appropriate and ensure the privacy of the student work.

**Annotation:** What's the idea?
Examples that DO meet the standard:
- Dropbox or course email is used for the submission of assignments.
- Quiz feature is utilized.

Example that does NOT meet the standard:
- All assignments are to be submitted to the discussion area of the course. Classmates may view others’ work and possibly the feedback provided, as well.

### IV. RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

Instructional materials are designed to be sufficiently comprehensive to achieve announced objectives and learning outcomes and are prepared by qualified persons competent in their fields. (Materials, other than standard textbooks are produced by recognized publishers, are prepared by the instructor or distance educators skilled in preparing materials for distance learning.)

**Standards IV.1:** The instructional materials have sufficient depth in content and are sufficiently comprehensive for the student to learn the subject.

**Annotation:** What’s the idea?
You are the expertise in the area of the course discipline, so your content should be guided by a curriculum committee at your institution.
### IV. RESOURCES AND MATERIALS – cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard IV.2:</th>
<th>Resources and materials are easily accessible to and usable by the learners.</th>
<th>Complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Annotation: What’s the idea?**
If some of the course resources, including textbooks, videos, CD-ROMS, etc., are unavailable within the framework of the course website, investigate how students would gain access to them, and examine their ease of use.

**Examples:**
- If textbooks and/or CD’s are used, titles, authors, publishers, ISBN numbers, copyright dates, and information as to where copies can be obtained, are listed.
- An area on the syllabus is devoted to required resources.
- Required software plug-ins are listed, along with instructions for obtaining and installing the plug-ins.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard IV.3:</th>
<th>The elements of the course-learning content, instructional methods, technologies, and course materials complement each other.</th>
<th>Complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Annotation: What’s the idea?**
Does anything in the course “stick out” as being unnecessary, inappropriate, etc.?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard IV.4:</th>
<th>All instructional materials are presented in a format appropriate to the online environment.</th>
<th>Complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Annotation: What’s the idea?**
Students who have the required technical equipment and software should be able to view the course materials online. Materials used in a face-to-face class may not work well in an online course without modification.

**Examples of some format problems:**
- Text size may be too inconsistent for typical View/Text Size setting.
- Science lab courses may include learning activities that are not easy to format for online learning.
- Large text files are presented without table of contents or unit numbering; hyperlinks may improve students’ access to information.

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**Notes/Questions:**
- What’s the idea?
- Does anything in the course “stick out” as being unnecessary, inappropriate, etc.?
- All instructional materials are presented in a format appropriate to the online environment.
- Students who have the required technical equipment and software should be able to view the course materials online. Materials used in a face-to-face class may not work well in an online course without modification.
- Examples of some format problems:
  - Text size may be too inconsistent for typical View/Text Size setting.
  - Science lab courses may include learning activities that are not easy to format for online learning.
  - Large text files are presented without table of contents or unit numbering; hyperlinks may improve students’ access to information.
V. LEARNER INTERACTION

The effective design of instructor-learner interaction and meaningful learner cooperation is essential to learner motivation, intellectual commitment, and personal development.

Standards V.1: The selection and use of tools and media supports the course outcomes and is integrated with texts and lesson assignments.

Annotation: What's the idea?
The learning activities in the course should foster the following types of interaction:
- Instructor-learner: Self-introduction; discussion postings and responses; feedback on assignments; evidence of one-to-one email communication, etc.
- Learner-content: essays, term papers, group projects, etc. based on readings, videos, and other course content; self-assessment exercises; group work products, etc.
- Learner-learner (if appropriate): Self-introduction exercise; group discussion postings; group projects; peer critiques, etc.

Notes/Questions:

Standard V.2: The student requirements for course interaction are clearly articulated.

Annotation: What's the idea?
A clear statement of requirements is particularly important when a type of interaction (e.g. participation in a discussion) is not optional. What are the penalties for non-participation? Impact on grade, etc.?

Example: Students required to participate in discussions are told how many times each week they must post original comments, how many times they must post responses to other’s comments, what the quality of the comments must be, how the comments will be evaluated, and what grade credit they can expect for various levels of performance.

Notes/Questions:

Standard V.3: Clear standards are set for instructor response and availability (turnaround time for email, grades posted, etc.)

Annotation: What's the idea?
Students need clear information about how quickly you will respond and how frequently you are available. Informing students about your response and availability times prevents unreasonable expectations from developing.

Ensure there are key events and interactions, including email turnaround time, time required for grade postings, discussion postings, etc. Be sure to define your standards for your availability including degree of participation in discussions, email response time, and availability via other media (phone, in-person) if applicable.
V. LEARNER INTERACTION – cont.

**Standard V.4:** The course design provides a variety of opportunities for interaction between instructor and learner. □ Complete

**Annotation:** What's the idea?
Students need to feel that you are close at hand, but the opportunities for interaction will vary with the discipline of the course.

Look for examples such as:
- An actively used and well-organized instructor-facilitated discussion board.
- Optional "electronic office hours" provided in the chat room.
- An invitation for the class to email you with individual concerns.

**Standard V.5:** Directions for contacting the instructor are clear and specific. □ Complete

**Annotation:** What's the idea?
Are directions for contacting you found easily within the course, preferably in more than one place?

Examples:
- syllabus
- course homepage
- course overview or introduction

**Standard V.6:** There is a method for student feedback of course and/or instruction. □ Complete

**Annotation:** What's the idea?
This may be in the form of a mid-term and/or end-of-term evaluation or survey.
VI. COURSE TECHNOLOGY

To enhance student learning, course technology should enrich instruction and foster learner interactivity.

**Standards VI.1:** The selection and use of tools and media supports the course outcomes and is integrated with texts and lesson assignments.

**Annotation: What’s the idea?**
Tools and media should be utilized within the course support related course outcomes, and should be integrated with texts and lesson assignments. Students should know how the tools and media fit into the assignments and how they relate to the course outcomes. Make sure that the technology is not used simply for the sake of using technology.

For example: A course might require viewing video materials, but it may not be clear whether some of the video materials illustrate or support any course outcome.

**Standard VI.2:** The selection and use of tools and media enhances learner interactivity and guides the student to become a more active learner.

**Annotation: What’s the idea?**
Look for tools and media in the course that help students actively engage in the learning process, rather than passively "absorbing" information.

Examples: automated "self-check" exercises requiring learner response; animations, simulations, and games that require student input; use of discussions

**Standard VI.3:** The course includes a description of minimal technology needed by the student and contains links to any additional requirements such as browser plug-ins, media players or additional software.

**Annotation: What’s the idea?**
Look for clear instructions on how students can obtain needed plug-ins and software packages.

**Standard VI.4:** The course technologies are economical and efficient.

**Annotation: What’s the idea?**
Technology should not be used for technology’s sake but should be utilized as an economical, efficient learning tool. Technology used should be user-friendly, practical and not overly complex.
### VI. COURSE TECHNOLOGY – cont.

**Standard VI.5: Instructions for accessing course-required resources at a distance (CLC Library, websites, etc.) are clear and easy to follow.** □ Complete

**Annotation: What’s the idea?**
Online students need to know about and be able to obtain access to educational resources by remote access. Information on these resources should be readily visible in an online class; clear instructions on how to access them should be provided.

**Notes/Questions:**

### VII. LEARNER SUPPORT

Courses are effectively supported for learners through fully accessible modes of delivery, resources, and learner support.

**Standards VII.1: The course homepage includes the official CLC Online Learning widgets.** □ Complete

**Annotation: What’s the idea?**
These widgets must be in place and should not be disabled by you.

**Notes/Questions:**

### VIII. END OF COURSE NECESSITIES

Courses are purged from the system 2 years after completion. Instructors need to back-up (export) at the end of the semester the data so it won’t be lost, in the event they need to retrieve it.

**Standards VIII.1: The course homepage includes the official CLC Online Learning widgets.** □ Complete

**Annotation: What’s the idea?**
To ensure you do not lose the following data, export it to another location:
- Evaluations
- Gradebook
- Sample work
- Surveys
- Discussions

Examples located in the CLC Faculty Lounge [xyz location].

**Notes/Questions:**
VIII. ADA AND COPYRIGHT COMPLIANCE

Access to course resources is in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and U.S. copyright laws are followed.

**Standards VIII.1:** There is evidence of effort to recognize the importance of ADA requirements (such as equivalent alternatives to auditory and visual content, Web page links that are self-describing and meaningful, and information conveyed on Web pages in color is also available without color).

**Annotation:** What's the idea?
Include a statement in your syllabus that tells learners how to gain access to disability services.

Alternative means of access to course information should be provided for students who are hearing or visually impaired. Include equivalent textual representations of images, audio, animations, and video in the course website. Presenting information in text format is generally acceptable, because screen reader software (used by those who are visually impaired) can read text.

All file names and web hyperlinks should have meaningful names. For instance, the link to take a quiz should say “Take Quiz 1”, not “click here”.

Icons used as links should also have HTML tags or an accompanying text link.

To accommodate students who are color blind, color text should also be identifiable by other methods (such as bold, italics, etc.)

**Standard VIII.2:** No apparent violations of copyright law exist within the course content or related materials.

**Annotation:** What’s the idea?
Resources appear to fall within the parameters of the Teach Act.

**Notes/Questions:**
X. TOOLS

To assist with placing tools and media within an online course, a non-inclusive list of free tools has been placed at: http://centrallakes.project.mnscu.edu/tools. Topics include:

- Flashcards
- Puzzle-makers and Games
- Videos
- Subject-Specific
- Gadgets

*Please note, the Online Technology Team is continually seeking new and intuitive resources to be added. As you discover additional un-noted sources, please forward them to Heidi Purdy.*