Online Course Guidelines Checklist - DRAFT

The following guidelines provide a roadmap for instructors during the course design process. This research-informed framework highlights key components essential to a high quality learning experience for students. <mark>Items highlighted in yellow are necessary in all fully online courses at the University of Toronto</mark>. Examples are provided when necessary to promote clarity.

Section 1. General Course Overview and Introduction
Instructor gives a thorough description of the course, as well as introduces students to the course format and to their peers.

☐ <mark>Instructor uses University of Toronto portal course environment to provide clear and detailed instructions for students to begin accessing all course components, such as syllabus, online tools, course schedule, assignments, and support files.</mark>

☐ <mark>Syllabus is posted in the course environment. See *Syllabus Template* for details of syllabus requirements (e.g. contact information, course schedule, policies, additional resources and support).</mark>

☐ <mark>Course description includes the purpose and format of the course, as well as prerequisite knowledge and competencies, if applicable.</mark>

☐ <mark>A list of technical competencies necessary for course completion is provided; identifying and delineating the role/extent the online environment plays in the total course.</mark>

☐ Students are encouraged to introduce themselves and initiate social presence through a community building activity.

☐ Instructor provides students with adequate time and notice to acquire course materials and become familiar with tools.

Note: send welcome email to the class at least one week before start, letting them know how to access course, about the course structure and invite them to access the LMS/course site.

Section 2. Assessment of Student Learning
Student Evaluation and Assessment refers to the process used to gather evidence of the achievement of the Learning Outcomes.

☐ Learning outcomes are provided for each unit. The outcomes should use active verbs, and also be specific and measureable. e.g. define, apply, synthesize (from Bloom's Taxonomy)

- [ ] The learning activities (including the assignments and ungraded activities) promote the achievement of the learning outcomes

- [ ] The assessment methods and related rubrics are detailed and appropriate to the student work and respective outcomes being assessed. This includes assessing modes of online participation and contributions.

- [ ] There are multiple ways for students to demonstrate competence or mastery. E.g., research project, paper, tests, presentations, or multimedia projects. Students are not just graded for online participation but the quality of their participation and contributions.

- [ ] Acceptable methods for completing assignments are identified (e.g. group work, open book, etc.).

- [ ] Assessments are authentic (e.g. designed with personal and real world relevance)

- [ ] Throughout the semester, instructor provides multiple opportunities to give feedback on students' learning and to help students "self-check" their learning.

- [ ] Throughout the semester, instructor provides multiple opportunities to solicit feedback from their students about their learning and on the course for the improvement of the course.
(e.g. mid term check in survey)

Section 3. Instructional Design
The course design (1) addresses the opportunities students have to interact with the content, their peers, and their instructor, and (2) encourages students to become active learners and contribute to the online course community.

- [ ] Instructor provides information about being a successful online learner/student (e.g. Quick Start Guide for Online Students).

- [ ] Navigation throughout the online components of the course is logical, consistent, and efficient.

- [ ] Learning activities facilitate and support active learning that encourages frequent and ongoing peer-to-peer engagement.

- [ ] If discussion is occurring, learners may pose questions and provide support to peers.

- [ ] The modes and requirements for student interaction are clearly communicated (e.g., frequency, length, timeliness).

- [ ] Instructor clearly explains his or her role regarding participation in the online environment.

☐ The course learning activities help students understand fundamental concepts, and build skills useful outside of the course.

☐ There are a variety of instructional material types and perspectives, while not overly relying on one content type such as text.
Materials types include PowerPoint, videos, text, open educational resources.

☐ Modeling academic integrity, instructor appropriately cites all resources and materials used throughout the course.

Section 4. Online Organization and Design

Addresses the instructor's use of technology to effectively deliver course content, engage students in learning activities (individual, student-to-student, and instructor-to-student), and allow students to express themselves or demonstrate learning.

☐ The tools and media support the course learning outcomes.

☐ Instructor takes advantage of the supported tools provided by the Learning Management System (Portal) to enhance learning. Institutionally supported tools are used when possible.

☐ Technological tools and resources used in the course enable student engagement and active learning.

☐ Instructor provides clear information regarding access to the technology and related resources required in the course.

☐ Instructor provides information about where and how to acquire the technologies. For downloads, instructor provides direct links. Any costs are outlined in the syllabus and comply with university policy regarding Ancillary fees.

☐ Acceptable technological formats for assignment completion and submissions have been articulated.

Section 5. Accessibility and Universal Design
Addresses the course's adherence to accessibility and universal design principles that are critical to some learners but that benefit all learners. Please contact Accessibility Services or the AODA office if you have any accessibility-related questions.

☐ Syllabus or student resource section links to the campus accessibility support information.

☐   All materials uploaded or linked from the course shell, as well as third-party tools, are accessible.

☐   <mark>All web content meets expectations of *Accessibility for Ontarian's with Disabilities Act.*</mark> See [Accessible Course Design](#) on the CTSI web site for guidance on labelling and formatting content to ensure accessibility.

Section 6. Guidelines to be addressed during course
Additional processes to ensure engagement and support of student learning during the course session.

☐   Students falling behind are prompted to determine what might be delaying their progress.

☐   Based on feedback from learners, instructor is able to modify elements (e.g., fix bad questions, extend deadlines, review methods of achieving course objectives).

☐   Instructor provides opportunities for students to reflect on their learning and connect their individual learning goals with the expectations (stated learning objectives and outcomes) of the instructor.

These guidelines are adapted with permission from The California State University's Quality Online Learning & Teaching, [Instructor (Self) and Peer-Review Course Assessment Instrument](#).

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