



## Department of Online Learning

### ✓ Online Course Quality Checklist

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The Department of Online Learning encourages faculty to use the following checklist to help them to include key elements in their online courses that contribute to promoting excellence in online course design and delivery.

#### **Course Design**

- Provide students with a syllabus with clearly stated learning outcomes.
- Provide clear instructions regarding what students need to do to begin the course.
- Provide students with information about yourself which should include contact information and, optionally, biographical information and a picture.
- If at all possible, build your course on the NJCU template which includes links to the NJCU Library, support resources, NJCU Copyright Policy, and other information.
- Use clear and consistent navigation. If you are not using all of the tools provided in the NJCU template, be sure to remove them so as not to confuse your students.
- Use the announcements tool to provide timely updates and announcements pertinent to your course. It is recommended that you make the Announcements Tool the entry point for your course so that students will be directed to pertinent announcements about your course as soon as they log in.
- Provide a course calendar or other management tool (e.g., single page listing assignments) with deadlines clearly identified.
- In compliance with NJCU Copyright Policy, provide the following notice within your course: "Materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection." Note: This notice is included in the NJCU template.

#### **Course Content**

- Use the Blackboard Learning Module to develop content for your course in manageable segments. This tool is used to deliver content with links to

chapter notes, discussion questions, assignments, assessments, and supplemental media. A modular delivery strategy guides students through an organized section of content before advancing them to the next lesson.

- Use a variety of media (e.g., audio, video, etc.) to deliver your content to keep students engaged and address the needs of students with various learning styles.
- Segment media into small clips to keep students engaged and to limit download time required for large media files.
- Make an effort to ensure that your course is accessible (e.g., use ALT tags, provide equivalent alternatives to auditory and visual content, etc.). If you need further information about accessibility, contact the Department of Online Learning.
- Make appropriate links and resources available as part of course content and check links on a regular basis to ensure they are current and available.
- Comply with copyright law in the posting of course materials.
- Ensure that course content is current and that content that students will need to begin the course is fully uploaded prior to the first day of the semester.

### **Interaction and Collaboration**

- Write a welcome message to your students in the Discussion Forum.
- Tell students how quickly and how frequently you will respond to email and discussion postings and when you will post grades for assignments and exams. Adherence to this schedule is of utmost importance.
- Invite students to introduce themselves by asking them to post an introduction in the Discussion Forum. Students may also, if they choose, upload an avatar to their personal information settings.
- Develop activities for your course that encourage faculty-student and student-student interaction. These might include use of the following Blackboard Learn tools: Messages, Assignments, Discussions, Chat, Blogs, Wikis, and Groups.
- Use the Discussion Forum for activities that encourage critical analysis and self-reflection.

### **Assessment**

- Provide assignments that are aligned with stated course objectives and that encourage critical thinking skills and measurable learning outcomes.
- Create assignments that encourage learners to maintain regular access to your course.
- Provide assessment and measurement strategies that are designed to provide feedback to the learner.
- Design assignments and projects that require students to make appropriate and effective use of external resources including print, library, and the Web.
- Provide students with ample opportunities for self-assessment.

- Utilize Blackboard Learn student learning assessments when appropriate.
- Provide rubrics for grading of assignments and activities.
- Clearly state minimal levels of student participation and how participation will be assessed.
- Solicit feedback from students by means of surveys or other communication methods for the continuous improvement of the course.

### **Classroom Management**

- Provide expectations for how students are to communicate online including examples (sometimes called “netiquette”) of what constitutes appropriate online behavior.
- Provide students with links to appropriate NJCU policies (e.g., Academic Integrity Policy, Copyright Policy, Responsible Use of Computing Resources, etc.). Note: The Department of Online Learning also includes this information as a link from Blackboard.
- Notify students when guests will be visiting your online classroom. Contact the Department of Online Learning for procedures regarding guest access.

### **Learner Support**

- Provide students with information as to how they may contact you and the expected timeframe for receiving responses.
- Advise students how they may obtain Blackboard assistance and support for online courses. Note: Students may call or visit the Department of Online Learning during University business hours and may send an e-mail message to [dlsupport@njcu.edu](mailto:dlsupport@njcu.edu) at any time. This email account is monitored on a regular basis, including evenings, weekends, and holidays. A response will be made to students within twenty-four hours.
- Remind students to use the CyberPrimer, NJCU’s web based tutorial for online learning. Note: The CyberPrimer is part of each student’s My Web Courses page in Blackboard Learn
- If you are not using the NJCU template, provide students with a link to the Congressman Frank J. Guarini Library website along with information as to how they may access the Library’s electronic databases and Information Literacy Tutorial. Note: The Information Literacy Tutorial is part of each student’s My Web Course’s Page.
- If free software or plug-ins are required for viewing your course content (e.g., Adobe Acrobat Reader, Real Player, etc.), provide students with links for downloading the required applications. Note: If students are required to purchase software for you course, this information should be noted in GothicNet Class Notes prior to student registration.