



Year 1, Number 15

Improving the Quality of Online Courses at UNTD

UNT Dallas seeks to be a provider of quality online courses and during this semester we took on the process of updating, revising and adopting new quality standards for online courses and programs.

The new Online Quality Assurance researched-based rubric that we will be using for Spring 2016 course offerings at UNT Dallas consists of 8 general standards:

1. Course Overview and Introduction
2. Learning Objectives
3. Assessments and Measurement
4. Instructional Materials
5. Course Activities and Learner Interaction
6. Course Technology
7. Learner Support
8. Accessibility and Usability.



These online quality standards focus on course design, not content, and each general standard is detailed in specific review standards, which provide detailed expectations for online course design. Our previous instrument was instituted in 2014 for our the first distance learning courses that were designed and offered at UNT Dallas and consisted of 14 basic standards. After using the same instrument for two years we decided it was time to updated and after doing an extensive research and analyze we decided to incorporate 12 standards, for a total of 26, in order to improve the quality of our online and hybrid course offerings.

The good news is that most of these standards can be easily met just by using the Online Course Template and the Online Syllabus Template that our office has created and made available for faculty as the required phrasing and information including in these items are present to meet SACS and THECB requirements. With this new version of the instrument we are taking our overall scores from 42 to 64 possible points in our general scorecards.

General review standards 2-6 are key components that must align (elements work together to ensure that students achieve the desired learning outcomes).

For an online course to meet quality expectations the course must receive a “Yes” on all 17 of the essential 3 point review standards in the instrument. And a minimum of 54 out of 64 possible points (85%) must be accumulated.

- 17 Standards are Essential each valued at 3 points for each standard
- 4 Standards are Very Important each valued at 2 points for each standard
- 5 Standards are Important each valued at 1 point for each standard

You can access a PDF version of the rubric [here](#). The added new standards are in red coloring, and it also includes detailed descriptions for each of the 26 specific review standards that we have adopted at UNTD, including annotations on how to meet each standard.

The Office of Distance Learning and Instructional Technologies provides continued support to faculty in the design, development and/or redevelopment of online courses and programs that incorporate the best practices reflected in current research and as such, this week we offered an additional workshop in hopes of assisting our faculty develop a quality online course for the Spring semester.

Three sessions were offered this past Tuesday with a good turnout from our faculty. A total of 19 instructors that will be teaching distance learning courses participated in our face-to-face sessions. In these workshops we explored the Online Quality Assurance project and processes including the Faculty example online course template, the online syllabus template and the online quality standards checklist instrument in order to prepare our distance learning instructors to be part of an initiative that positively impacts the design of online/blended courses, and ultimately, student learning and success.

Number of Attendees to the Workshop by School	
School	Instructors
Business	7
Education	4
Human Services	3
Liberal Arts & Sciences	5



These sessions were also live streamed and recorded for archive. If you were not able to join us and would like to review the workshop on your own please click any of the following links:

10:00 a.m. Session

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xdVRPjH1NxQ>

2:00 p.m. Session

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WoXmhdGpug>

5:30 p.m. Session

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EO92VNxdh2w>

Alternatively, faculty can contact our office to arrange a consultation to discuss the online quality standards rubric.

Remember that faculty are guided and supported each step of the way so they can begin to identify areas for improvement in their own courses as they are being designed and developed. And please be mindful that the Online Quality Assurance program is a continuous and collaborative improvement process that recognizes that courses meeting the standards still have room for continuing improvement and courses that do not meet standards initially will receive useful feedback to guide revision.

Our students' online experience and their success is our drive! Developing and teaching online courses is an ongoing process to review, evaluate, and revise. Thank you for your continued support in improving the quality of our distance learning course offerings.



End-of-year Message from the Director

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

As we approach commencement today, this end-of-semester and end-of-year message continues an ongoing series of regular weekly communications from the office of Distance Learning and Instructional Technologies to the UNT Dallas community on issues of importance to the university related to distance learning and the design and development of our online teaching and learning environments. At the end of this year serving as director of DLIT, I continue to be inspired by and thankful for the commitment I see demonstrated daily by our faculty, staff, administration and students. I also recognize that it is the people that make the difference and affect the lives of our students. The positive momentum we have created together continues to move us toward achieving our goals. To my hard-working colleagues and staff at the office, our student workers, our Advisory Committee members, our distance learning instructors and students, and everyone that collaborated in one way or another with Distance Learning, I am deeply grateful for all of your support and contributions.



As we close another semester and as we close 2015, thank you for all that you've done to make this past year such a great year for DLIT. There are many accomplishments for which we can all take great pride and satisfaction. I value the energy and commitment that all of you bring to our work every day. It is clear that what we are doing in the field of online education at UNTD is affecting the lives of our students and their future – and I thank you for that.

I hope everyone has a great winter break. I look forward to seeing you in January as we continue to work together and build our success in 2016.

With all best wishes,
Arturo Cole
Director
Office of Distance Learning and Instructional Technologies

And from the DLIT Team... Here's our 2015 e-Card!

Our best holiday wishes for the season!

Click the [link](#) to watch our holiday e-card.



2015 Season's Greetings from Distance Learning – UNT Dallas

<https://youtu.be/SFwZHG49u0>

A holiday e-card from your UNT Dallas friends and colleagues at Distance Learning and Instructional Technologies.

Warmest regards from all of us at DLIT.



As the semester is practically over, we do not have any scheduled events for next week. The DLIT Team will be meeting next week to plan the Spring 2016 calendar of events. Please send us an [email](#) if there is something you would like to see included for next semester. As always, we welcome any comment, suggestion or idea you may have on webinars, workshops, training sessions and any other idea you may have to bring Distance Learning closer to our faculty and our students. Thank you!

Articles



(Click the images to read the articles)



eLearning Industry

Visual Thinking In eLearning: What eLearning Professionals Should Know <http://dlvr.it/CyLJVY>
#eLearningDesignandDevelopment
#eLearningDesignTips



eLearning Industry

Leading Questions In eLearning: What eLearning Professionals Should Know <http://dlvr.it/Cwxzqc>
#eLearningDesignandDevelopment
#eLearningAssessment



eLearning Industry

The Dos And Don'ts Of Storytelling In eLearning

Here are some dos and don'ts PulseLearning recommends for how to effectively use storytelling in eLearning.

<http://elearningindustry.com/storytelling-dos-and-donts-in-elearning>

#eLearning #InstructionalDesign #Storytelling



The Dos And Don'ts Of Storytelling In eLearning - eLearning Industry
elearningindustry.com



eLearning Industry

8 Tips To Engage And Inspire Baby Boomers In eLearning

Baby boomers weren't raised with computers on their laps and mobile gadgets at their fingertips. As such, teaching these mature learners presents its own set of challenges. Thankfully, there are some tips that can help you create motivational, inspiring, and engaging eLearning experiences for... [Continue Reading](#)



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Contact Us!

The **Office of Distance Learning and Instructional Technologies** invites faculty and staff to join and participate in our development programs. These events provide an opportunity to network with faculty from other departments, learn new instructional strategies and tools, and become aware of best practices in online teaching and learning. Hope to see you there, and don't forget to register for our workshops and sessions! Please contact us with ideas and suggestions for future events:

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Phone: 972-338-5580

Email: UNTDDistance@unt.edu

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