

COURSE DESIGN RUBRIC

The Online Education Initiative (OEI) is a collaborative effort among California Community Colleges (CCCs) to ensure that significantly more students are able to complete their educational goals by increasing both access to and success in **high quality online courses**.



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Revisions approved by the Online Education Initiative Steering Committee November 18, 2016.

The OEI Course Design Rubric was developed in 2014 by the OEI Professional Development work group to assure that all courses offered as part of the initiative promote student success and meet existing regulatory and accreditation requirements. It has undergone three major revisions since then, including the current iteration, in response to changes in available instructional technology and feedback from both instructors and reviewers.

For a course to be offered to students in the CCC Course Exchange, it must first go through a course review process that ensures alignment with the OEI Course Design Rubric. The Rubric is divided into five sections.

SECTIONS A-C

Section A: Content Presentation

The 13 elements for quality course design in this section address how content is organized and accessed in the course management system. Key elements include course navigation, learning objectives, and access to student support information.

Section B: Interaction

The 8 elements in this section address instructor initiated and student initiated communication. Key elements of quality course design covered in this section include regular effective contact, student-to-student collaboration, and communication activities that build a sense of community among online learners.

Section C: Assessment

The 8 elements in this section address the variety and effectiveness of assessments within the course. Key elements include the alignment of objectives and assessments, the clarity of instructions for completing assessments, and evidence of timely and regular feedback.

Following a review by a team of trained faculty peer reviewers, each element in Sections A-C will be marked in one of three ways:

Incomplete:

The element is missing or present to a degree that does not adequately support student success in online learning.

Exchange Ready:

The element is present and effectively designed to support student success in online learning.

Additional Exemplary Elements:

This designation recognizes design choices that further enhance the student experience in the online learning environment.

Review Results

If any element in Section A-C is Incomplete, the instructor will receive on-going support from a dedicated Course Design Specialist to bring the element(s) into alignment with the rubric.

SECTION D

Accessibility

The 23 elements in this section are reviewed to determine if a student using assistive technologies will be able to access course content as required by Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (also known as "508 Compliance").

Since Section D addresses elements that are required by law to be present, the elements in this section can only be marked as **Incomplete or Exchange Ready**.

Review Results

If any element in Section D is Incomplete, the instructor will receive on-going support from a dedicated Course Design Specialist or an Accessibility Expert to bring the element(s) into alignment with the rubric.

SECTION E

Institutional Accessibility Concerns

The 4 elements in this section cover accessibility of external tools and third-party content. While the accessibility elements in Section D are primarily under the control of faculty when developing a course, the elements in Section E may be outside the purview of the instructor which would require additional consideration or intervention at the institutional level.

Review Results

If a course is Exchange Ready in all Sections except E, the OEI Chief Professional Development Officer and the Director of Accessibility will look at the specific accessibility issue(s) and work with the instructor on a plan for making the course accessible.

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In addition to preparing courses for the CCC Course Exchange, the OEI Course Design Rubric is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License and can be used as:

- A roadmap for instructors designing new online courses.
- A tool for instructors seeking to update or improve existing courses.
- The foundation for starting a local POCR (Peer Online Course Review) Club.

Visit <u>ccconlineed.org</u> for more information on the OEI, the Rubric, and the Course Review Process. We welcome your feedback and suggestions.

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Incomplete	Exchange Ready	Additional Exemplary Elements			
A1: Placement of Unit-level Objectives					
Objectives are not included in individual learning units/modules.	Objectives are included in the individual learning units/modules.	Objectives are included in assessments.			
A2: Clarity of Unit-level Objective	es				
Objectives do not include demonstrable learning outcomes.	Objectives include demonstrable learning outcomes.	Objectives are written in language that is student centered.			
A3: Alignment of Unit-level Object	ctives				
Unit content and activities are not aligned with unit objectives.	Unit content and activities are aligned with unit objectives.	The connection between the content/activities and the unit objectives are made explicitly clear to the students.			
Criteria A1 – A3 Comments:					
Criteria A1 – A3 Comments:					

Incomplete Exchange Ready Additional Examples of Examp					
	<u> </u>				Exemplary Elements
A4: C	Navigation Navigation and content flow are not easily determined.		Navigation and content flow are easily determined by the user.		Clearly labeled tutorial materials that explain how to navigate the specific course are included.
A5: U	Init-level Chunking				
	Content is not presented in visibly distinct learning units or modules.		Content is presented in visibly distinct learning units or modules.		Learning units or modules are consistently structured and sequenced allowing students to better anticipate and manage their workload.
A6: P	age-level Chunking				
	Page content is not chunked in manageable segments using headings; long pages of text make online reading difficult.		Page content is chunked in manageable segments using headings that facilitate online reading.		Page content uses descriptive headings and subheadings that enhance student understanding of the material.
Crite	ria A4 – A6 Comments:				

Incomplete	Exchange Ready	Additional Exemplary Elements
A7: Effective Use of CMS Tools	5	
CMS tools that could reduce the labor intensity of learning are not used effectively.	Course Management System (CMS) tools are used to reduce the labor- intensity of learning in a way that streamlines access to materials and activities for students.	CMS Tools are used to provide integrated and innovative learning materials and activities for students.
A8: Student Centered Teaching	9	
Content is presented using only one modality.	A variety of modalities, such as text, audio, video, images and/or graphics are used to create student-centered learning.	Technology is used creatively to emphasize student-centered learning throughout the course.
A9: Instructions		
Instructions for working with course content is incomplete, or nonexistent.	Course design includes instructions for learners to work with content in meaningful ways (e.g. instructing students to take notes during a video, explaining the purpose of an external resource).	Instructions are directly embedded with the content or activity.
A10: Individualized Learning		
There are few or no individualized learning opportunities, such as remedial activities or resources for advanced learning.	Individualized learning opportunities, such as remedial activities or resources for advanced learning, are provided.	Numerous individualized learning opportunities are provided throughout the course.
Criteria A7 – A10 Comments:		

	Incomplete		Exchange Ready	Additional Exemplary Elements
A11:	Learner Feedback			• •
	Learners do not have an opportunity to give anonymous feedback to the instructor regarding course design and/or course content.		Learners have the opportunity to give anonymous feedback to the instructor regarding course design and/or course content after course completion.	There are opportunities to give anonymous feedback both during course delivery and after course completion.
A12:	Institutional Policies		·	
	Institutional policies relevant for learner success are not included or are difficult to find.	Institutional policies relevant for learner success (e.g., plagiarism, academic honesty, technical support, and DSPS) are included and easy to find.		Institutional policies are provided in units or activities where they are most relevant.
A13:	Student Services			
	Links to institutional services are not included, thus requiring students to exit the course management system to find links for support.	DSPS office and the library, are embedded in		Links to institutional services are provided in units or activities when they may be needed most.
	•			
Criter	ria A11 – A13 Comments:			

Section B: Interaction

Incomplete	Exchange Ready	Additional Exemplary Elements	
B1: Pre-Course Contact			
Instructor does not initiate contact prior to or at the beginning of the course.	Instructor initiates contact prior to or at the beginning of course.	Instructor provides multiple resources to help students successfully start the course.	
B2: Instructor Initiated Contact	l .		
The plan for communication is unclear or missing.	The instructor provides students with his/her plan to engage in regular effective contact using CMS communication tools that includes expected time frames for responses to inquiries, discussion board posts, and feedback on assignments and assessments.	The instructor's plan to engage in regular effective contact includes the use of a wide variety of communication tools.	
B3: Technology Support			
The instructor's role for supporting course technology is not explained to the students.	The instructor's role for supporting course technology is explained to students, and links to technology support are provided.	Links to technology support are provided where needed throughout the course.	
B4: Instructor Contact Info			
Contact information for the instructor is missing or not easy to find.	Contact information for the instructor is easy to find and includes expected response times.	Students can choose from a variety of tools to contact the instructor.	
Criteria B1 – B4 Comments:			

Section B: Interaction

Incomplete	Exchange Ready	Additional Exemplary Elements		
B5: Student Initiated Interaction				
Students are not given opportunities to initiate interaction.	Opportunities for student-initiated interaction with other students and the instructor are clearly available and encouraged.	Student-initiated interaction contributes to a student-centered learning environment.		
B6: Student-to-Student Interac	tion			
Student-to-student interaction may be present but is not a required part of the course.	Student-to-student interaction that reinforces course content and learning outcomes is required as part of the course.	Student-to-Student collaboration is designed to build workplace skills such as teamwork, cooperation, negotiation, and consensus-building.		
B7: Learning Community				
Communication activities that help build a sense of community among learners are not included.	The course includes communication activities that are designed to build a sense of community among learners.	The design and facilitation of communication activities are responsive to the variety of cultures and communication styles in the learning community.		
B8: Participation Levels				
Guidelines explaining required levels of student participation are not provided.	Guidelines explaining required levels of student participation (i.e., quantity and quality of interactions) are provided.	A rubric or equivalent grading document is included to explain how participation will be evaluated.		
Criteria B5 – B8 Comments:				

Section C: Assessment

Incomplete	Exchange Ready	Additional Exemplary Elements
C1: Authenticity		
There is little or no evidence of authenticity built into assessments.	Assessment activities lead to the demonstration of learning outcomes.	Assessments are designed to mimic authentic environments to facilitate transfer.
C2: Validity		
Students are evaluated on performance unrelated to the stated objectives.	Assessments appear to align with the objectives.	Assessments match the objectives and learners are directed to the appropriate objective(s) for each assessment.
C3: Variety		
Assessment types are limited to only one type of assessment (either formative or summative).	Both formative and summative assessments are used.	Multiple types of formative and summative assessments are used (research project, objective test, discussions, etc.).
C4: Frequency		
Assessments are few and infrequent.	Multiple assessments are administered during the duration of the course.	Frequent assessments occur at regular intervals throughout the course, providing students with timely feedback on learning and performance.
Criteria C1 – C4 Comments:		

Section C: Assessment

Additional Additional			
Incomplete	Exchange Ready	Exemplary Elements	
C5: Rubrics/Scoring Guide Rubrics or descriptive criteria for desired outcomes may not be included for some assessment activities.	Rubrics or descriptive criteria for desired outcomes are included.	Rubrics and/or descriptive criteria for desired outcomes include models of "good work."	
C6: Assessment Instructions			
Assessments include little or no instruction.	Instructions clearly explain to students how to successfully complete the assessments.	Instructions are written clearly and with exemplary detail to ensure understanding.	
C7: Feedback			
There is little to no evidence of meaningful feedback on student assessments.	The course includes a clear plan for providing meaningful, timely feedback on assessments.	Students are given clear instructions on accessing feedback in the CMS and guidance on applying feedback to improve learning and performance.	
C8: Self-Assessment			
There is little to no evidence that students are provided opportunities for self-assessment	Opportunities for student self-assessment with feedback are present.	There are multiple opportunities for student self-assessment that encourage students to seek timely additional help.	
Criteria C5 – C8 Comments:			

Section D: Accessibility – Content Pages

	Incomplete		Exchange Ready	
D1: H	eading Styles			
	Content Pages do not use heading styles or use them inconsistently, including skipping heading levels, and/or altered fonts/size/format/color are used instead of heading styles.		Content Pages consistently use heading styles (i.e. Heading 2, Heading 3, etc.).	
D2: L	ists			
	Numbers, letters, or symbols are manually inserted to create a list.		Lists are created using the Bullet or Numbered List tool in the rich text editor.	
D3: L	inks			
	Links are not descriptive, or URLs are displayed instead of meaningful links; and/or underlining is used for emphasis or for denoting headings.		Links are descriptive, and avoid redundancy; links avoid using non-descriptive phrases; and underlining is only used to denote active hyperlinks.	
D4: T	ables			
	Tables do not use designated header cells.		Table cells designated as row and/or column headers allow screen readers to read table cells in the correct order.	
D5: C	olor Contrast			
	Insufficient color contrast between foreground (text or graphics) and the background could create difficulties for low vision and color blind students.		There is sufficient color contrast between foreground and background to meet Section 508 standards.	
D6: C	olor and meaning			
	Visual elements alone have been used to convey meaning.		Visual elements (color, bolding, all caps) are not used as the sole way to convey importance or meaning.	
D7: Ir	nages			
	Does not consistently use descriptive alternative text, or the image has text that is not part of the alternative description, or uses "image of" or "picture of" as part of the alt text.		Every image (including those used in Pages, Discussions, Quizzes and Assignments) uses descriptive alternative text that includes any text visible in the image, does not contain "image of" or "picture of", and uses "" if the image is purely decorative.	
Content Degree (Criteria D4 D7) Comments				
Conte	ent Pages (Criteria D1 – D7) Comments:			

Section D: Accessibility - Files

	Incomplete	Exchange Ready
D8: H	eading Styles	
	Documents do not use heading styles or use them inconsistently, including skipping heading levels, and/or altered fonts/size/format/color are used instead of heading styles.	Documents consistently use heading styles (i.e. Heading 2, Heading 3, etc.).
D9: L	ists	
	Numbers, letters, or symbols are manually inserted to create a list.	Lists are created using the Bullet or Numbered List tool.
D10:	Links	
	Links are not descriptive, or URLs are displayed instead of meaningful links; and/or underlining is used for emphasis or for denoting headings.	Links are descriptive, and avoid redundancy; links avoid using non-descriptive phrases; and underlining is only used to denote active hyperlinks.
D11:	Tables	
	Tables do not use designated header cells.	Table cells designated as row and/or column headers allow screen readers to read table cells in the correct order.
D12:	Color Contrast	
	Insufficient color contrast between foreground (text or graphics) and the background could create difficulties for low vision and color blind students.	There is sufficient color contrast between foreground and background to meet Section 508 standards.
D13:	Color and meaning	
	Visual elements alone have been used to convey meaning.	Visual elements (color, bolding, all caps) are not used as the sole way to convey importance or meaning.
D14:	lmages	
	Does not consistently use descriptive alternative text, or the image has text that is not part of the alternative description, or uses "image of" or "picture of" as part of the alt text.	Every image uses descriptive alternative text that includes any text visible in the image, doesn't contain "image of" or "picture of", and uses "" if the image is purely decorative.
Files	(Criteria D8 – D14) Comments:	
1 1169	Contona Do – D14) Comments.	

Section D: Accessibility - Files continued

Incomplete	Exchange Ready
D15: Digital Reading Order	
Reading order is not correctly set so that content is presented in the proper sequence to screen readers and other assistive technologies.	Reading order is correctly set so that content is presented in the proper sequence to screen readers and other assistive technologies.
D16: Digital Presentations	
Some slides have identical titles, reading order is not properly set (slides have had elements added to the layout), and/or images/charts do not include alternative text. Some text visible in slides is not visible in Outline View.	Every slide has a unique title, reading order is properly set (slides use pre-set layouts), and all images/charts include alternative text. All text is visible in Outline View so that it can be read by assistive technology.
D17: PDFs	
PDFs contain accessibility issues and do not pass the Adobe Accessibility Check.	PDFs pass the Adobe Accessibility Check with no substantial errors.
D18: Spreadsheets	
Spreadsheets lack labels and supplemental explanations that would allow a student with visual or motor impairment to make use of the content using assistive technologies.	Spreadsheets include labels for the rows and columns, detailed labels for any charts, and is accompanied by a textual description of the spreadsheet, drawing attention to key cells, trends, and totals.
Files (Criteria D15 – D18) Comments:	

Section D: Accessibility - Multimedia

Incomplete	Exchange Ready
D19: Audio and Video	
Accurate transcripts are not included for audio and/or closed captioning for video is not present.	Accurate transcripts are included for audio, closed captioning for video, and narrative descriptions are available when possible.
D20: Live Broadcast	
Live broadcasts do not have synchronized captions.	Live broadcasts include a means for displaying synchronized captions.
D21: Auto-Play	
Multimedia is set to auto-play.	Multimedia is not set to auto-play.
D22: Flashing Content	
Contains blinking or strobing multimedia.	Multimedia (including gifs and images) do not blink or strobe.
Multimodia (Critaria D40 D22) Communitar	
Multimedia (Criteria D19 – D22) Comments:	

Section D: Accessibility – Accommodation

Incomplete	Exchange Ready	
D23: Instructional Materials Inventory		
Inherently inaccessible learning objects are present, and an instructional material inventory and plan for accommodation has not been provided.	An Instructional Material Inventory of each inherently inaccessible learning object is provided with a plan that has been reviewed and approved by the DSPS office for accommodating students with disabilities.	
Instructional material inventory form available at: http://bit.ly/material-inventory		
Multimedia (Criteria D19 – D22) Comments:		

Section E: Institutional Accessibility Concerns

Incomplete*	Exchange Ready	
E1: LTI/Apps		
LTI or Apps used in the course have not been verified as accessible.	Any LTI or Apps used in the course have been verified as accessible.	
E2: Media Players		
Third-party media players used in the course have not been verified as accessible.	Any third-party media players used in the course have been verified as accessible.	
E3: Websites		
Third-party websites used in the course have not been verified as accessible.	Any third-party media players used in the course have been verified as accessible.	
E4: Publisher Content		
Publisher content used in the course has not been verified as accessible.	Any publisher content used in the course has been verified as accessible.	
*A determination of incomplete may result in an additional level of review for OEI Exchange courses.		
Criteria E1 – E4 Comments:		