

Required Course Delivery Standards

Online instructors work with instructional designers to ensure that online courses in our programs meet these standards. Instructors and instructional designers also use these standards to guide the course delivery process. Each standard includes a list of suggested strategies for meeting the standard.

Foster social presence using a variety of strategies.

- Use the “Ask the Class” or “Raise your Hand” discussion area to answer student questions within 24 hours during the M-F workweek; use email for confidential questions.
- Share a balance of your personal and professional interests in your instructor bio and Announcements.
- Use the Announcements tool regularly to remind students of due dates, provide weekly summaries, and share current events.
- Announce your absences to students with guidance on what to do while you’re away, being mindful to minimize absences.
- Communicate your weekend policy to the students so they know whether you will be available for questions.
- Post in the Watercooler discussion for non-class related topics (if your class has one).
- Post a wrap-up message saying goodbye and encouraging students to apply their new knowledge in their careers.

Build a sense of community when the course opens.

- Post a welcome message in the Announcements telling students how to get started.
- Post your instructor bio. This can be text and a photo, or a “digital introduction” video.
- Respond and make a connection to every student who posts on the introduction board.
- Refer to information a student shared in their intro when providing grade feedback, if possible.
- Facilitate an icebreaker activity.
- Provide students with all the materials they need to be successful (e.g., Syllabus, course assignments, grading policies).
- Communicate and conduct all class activities within the online classroom.

Guide student progress and deepen learning with formative feedback.

- Provide concise and constructive feedback on graded assignments.
- Provide scores AND feedback when grading assignments. A letter grade or % is not sufficient, nor is a “good job” type comment.
- Provide scores and feedback within one week after submission, or prior to the next graded assignment or exam where the material is covered.
- Follow the final grading procedures. You will receive an email from the Enrollment and Retention Coordinator with more details.
- Complete grading within a week after the final graded assignment or exam is due.
- Contact your instructional designer if a student is receiving an incomplete to ensure that the course materials will remain available until the student agrees to complete the class.
- Contact your instructional designer if a student’s overall performance is less than satisfactory and provide some rationale, who will then involve the appropriate program administration staff.

Interact with students to create a community of inquiry.

- Interact with students in discussions.
- Monitor course discussions to ensure adherence to the netiquette standards. Take corrective measures when necessary.
- Jump-start stale discussions by asking guiding questions. Try to find a good balance – don't dominate the discussion or be absent from it. Try to post the same number of times within each small group discussion area.
- If using the Discussion tool for students to collaborate on teamwork, make your role clear for participating in these discussions. In most cases, the instructor will monitor the discussion area as needed in this case and will not actively participate.

Monitor the academic integrity of graded assessments.

- Get to know your students. Have students complete their profiles and answer questions about themselves. Ask about their backgrounds and any experiences that relate to the course. Use these or some additional writing activity to provide you with a writing sample that exhibits their typical writing style. Refer to these materials later in the course if you suspect that a student is not completing his or her own work.
- Use originality checkers (e.g., Turnitin) as a learning tool to help students learn to evaluate whether their work is original.
- Search online to determine if parts of a student's paper were taken from the Internet. You can also search library databases for text taken directly from library resources.
- Model academic integrity in Announcements and Commentaries.
- Google some of your assessments to see if the answers are available online.
- Remind students of the Code of Conduct and what it means.
- Require a Cheating/Plagiarism quiz or an Academic Integrity module.
- State your policy on academic integrity in your syllabus.
- Regularly remind students of your academic integrity policy, the Code of Conduct, and what the consequences are for academic misconduct.
- Use a synchronous meeting tool to give oral exams.
- Check the document properties on submitted files to see whose name is associated with the file.
- Report instances of academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating, plagiarism) to your instructional designer, who will then involve the appropriate program administration staff.

Monitor attendance, accessibility, and retention.

- State your excused absence and late work policy in your Syllabus.
- Follow up with students who are not actively engaged in the course. If you've had no response, contact your instructional designer for assistance.
- If you have any concerns about your students, contact your instructional designer for information about student support services. If a student needs an accommodation, work with your instructional designer to meet their need(s).

Identify opportunities to sustain and enhance course quality.

- Review student feedback on the Midterm Course Evaluation and work with your instructional designer to make necessary changes to the course design or delivery.
- Encourage students to complete the end of course evaluation during the last week of the course.
- Review student feedback on the end of course evaluation.
- Review statistics on quiz and exam questions.
- Identify common trends in the Ask the Class discussion and student emails.
- Discuss revisions with your instructional designer for the next time the course is run. Speak with her if you have concerns from your evaluations.