

# UW MBA Consortium Required Course Design Standards

All course material, including persistent course content, supplementary materials, and external tools must:

**1. Be meaningful for UW MBA Consortium students.**

*Why Is This Important:* UW MBA Consortium students are working professionals who may have some exposure to foundational business topics. Many of these students have advanced degrees in other fields. These students are looking for current and innovative ways to apply the course content in their professional lives. Course objectives should focus on high level skills such as analyzing, synthesizing, and applying concepts. Course material previously developed for an undergraduate course in another program won't have the appropriate topical focus or level of objectives required for graduate students.

**2. Be current and available to UW MBA Consortium students through UW-Eau Claire McIntyre library, standard textbook vendors, or open educational resources.**

*Why Is This Important:* UW MBA Consortium students need to access their course materials in different formats, such as print and electronic, and through different vendors so that they have cost effective options for purchasing and renting the material. Certain formats, such as custom books from publishers or self-authored textbooks in proprietary formats, limit the options students have for accessing and purchasing the required course material and create barriers for students.

**3. Be appropriate for the number of student credit hours.**

*Why Is This Important:* UW MBA Consortium students are balancing full-time careers and family obligations. To be successful in balancing their busy schedules, students should encounter consistent workload expectations across courses, based on student credit hour expectations and course length. The expectation at the graduate level is 45 hours per credit. This includes time spent on required readings or videos, reading and responding to discussions, and completing individual assignments. This guideline also ensures that revision and development work is consistent and manageable for instructors.

**4. Transfer between different instructors.**

*Why Is This Important:* UW MBA Consortium courses are taught by various instructors, so courses should transfer between instructors with minimal changes required. Unit material that is mostly text-based with minimal personal references generally transfers well. A unit with a large amount of web cam video of an instructor would not transfer easily between instructors, since students tend to become confused about who the instructor is, and the instructor has a difficult time establishing their presence in the course.

**5. Align with the course description and course level outcomes, and with any required program goals and assessment activities.**

*Why Is This Important:* Students should find that the course material meets the expectations they had based on the course title and course description available to them. The Standards committee may need to evaluate changes to course descriptions and course outcomes to determine how other courses may be impacted by the proposed changes and whether the change impacts the program's assessment and ability to maintain accreditation.

- 6. Follow the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the principles of universal design to give all individuals equal opportunities to learn, regardless of age, ability, learning preference, or situation.**

*Why Is This Important:* The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) states that online education is subject to the standards specified in sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The purpose of these laws is to provide disabled individuals with access to information that is comparable to the access available to others. ADA compliance involves things like captioning videos and providing text-based descriptions of images. It also involves providing multiple ways to access and engage with course material. Research tells us that making course content accessible to students with disabilities also increases student learning for most students.

- 7. Connect with as many different learners as possible by promoting the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).**

*Why Is This Important:* EDI involves developing course content and teaching practices that build community and create a safe and engaging environment for all students, including marginalized students. EDI practices help us retain students and increase student participation and engagement for all students. This may include strategies such as using diverse examples and images in all course materials, using direct and clear communication (e.g., avoid using idioms, which are difficult for non-native English speakers to understand), and including clear expectations for collaboration and sharing of answers (behaviors that we might classify as cheating are acceptable in other cultures).

- 8. Provide opportunities for interaction and feedback between instructors and students.**

*Why Is This Important:* According to the Higher Education Opportunity Act that pertains to all institutions receiving Title IV financial aid, “regular and substantive interaction” between instructors and students is a required component of distance education and must “support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, synchronously or asynchronously.” Therefore, our courses will contain a variety of activities, mostly asynchronous, in which students have opportunities to engage with the instructor, the course content, and with other students. Likewise, AACSB also values student-faculty interactions as part of their standards.

- 9. Follow the requirements from section 110(1) of copyright law and the UW MBA Consortium’s interpretation of fair use as applied to online course design and delivery.**

*Why Is This Important:* Section 110(1) of copyright law allows for the performance and display of copyrighted materials in face-to-face teaching at nonprofit educational institutions. In the online classroom, copyright gets much more complicated, since sharing materials often involves copying and distributing those materials. Copyright compliance involves things like linking to resources (e.g., articles, videos, images) instead of copying them and using copyrighted materials for specific instructional purposes rather than for entertainment. The UW – Eau Claire Copyright Officer works with the iDocs staff to determine whether copyrighted materials fall under fair use.

**10. Model the UW MBA Consortium Code of Conduct and guidelines for promoting academic integrity.**

*Why Is This Important:* Under the right circumstances, most people will cheat to some degree! Research indicates that focusing on course design and delivery strategies is more effective than using policing devices and strategies when minimizing cheating and improving student learning. Such strategies include balancing the weight of your assessments and using authentic assessments, instead of using originality checkers and proctoring tools, and avoiding using publisher material for summative assessments. Peer influence is one of the most significant factors in determining whether a student cheats. Students who know or even perceive that their fellow students are cheating are WAY more likely to cheat than those who don't. Create a culture of academic integrity, by stating your expectations in an academic integrity policy in your syllabus, and by talking with students about the Code of Conduct and what it means.

**11. Demonstrate current research-based best practices for online course design reflected in iDocs resources and professional development opportunities.**

*Why Is This Important:* The body of research supporting best practices for designing online courses is constantly evolving. The iDocs staff follows the research and procures best practices that are most appropriate for meeting the learning goals of our program. Instructors are expected to complete our online teaching certification course prior to teaching online for the first time. Instructors are also encouraged to attend the annual UW MBA Consortium Faculty Meeting, which offers additional professional development opportunities. Instructors also collaborate with an instructional designer when teaching and revising courses to ensure research-based best practices are met in the course design.

**12. Protect student privacy, data, and the integrity of the digital learning environment.**

*Why Is This Important:* Students should be assured that we have thoroughly vetted tools and technologies required for use in their courses to ensure these companies are not profiting from using their data and information for unknown purposes. Examples may include simulation websites, online self-assessment tools, or other subscription services. Any required technologies or subscriptions that are not already provided through a UW home campus or within Canvas will need to be approved through UW System procurement and/or through the UW System DLE external application request process to ensure that student data is protected.