

Best Practices for Teaching: Strategies for Course Design and Delivery

This document is intended to illustrate possible methods for faculty to achieve greater success in their teaching. It is understood that not all faculty will utilize all of these methods in every teaching scenario. This is not a tool for evaluation.

Use of Technology	All Courses	Online	Blended
The instructor effectively uses college technology systems, classroom technology, and discipline-specific instructional technology.	x		
The instructor's web page includes instructor's name, email address, phone number, and office hours.	x		
Course Design	All Courses	Online	Blended
The course syllabus is linked to the instructor's web page.	x		
The course syllabus includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment between course objectives and course activities • Student participation guidelines • A defined schedule with deadlines (including date and time of day) • Instructions for how to submit assignments, especially if there are special requirements for file formats and names • Consequences for missing deadlines • Any other information suggested by our Best Practices for Faculty Syllabi 	x		
Course content is organized in a way that is logical and consistent.	x		
Approximately one half of all coursework is completed by midterm.	x		
The rigor of the course is appropriate to the duration and credit hours awarded. Each credit hour should require 45 hours of work.	x		
Learning activities have a narrow focus, with intervals between.	x		
Faculty follows up with students who do not meet minimum expectations.	x		
Faculty demonstrate an understanding of intellectual property issues related to teaching.	x		
Faculty are aware of and work to increase accessibility to comply with ADA.	x		
Students are sent a welcome message and a link to the course syllabus, outside of the Learning Management System.		x	
Content is delivered in a variety of methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lecture and laboratory notes • reading summaries • vocabulary/glossary items • sample test questions • online assignments • self-assessments • grading rubrics • suggested/recommended readings • audio or video segments • presentation slides • links to student services and resources 		x	
Within the first week of the course, a graded or substantive assignment (not just a login) is administered to ensure students understand course expectations.	x	Required for reporting	
Within the first week of the course, students are given opportunities to acclimate to the technology and foster class socialization.	x		
Activities done in class are clearly linked to required online activities.			x
Graded assessments are administered in both the online and face-to-face components.			x

Communication/Interaction	All Courses	Online	Blended
The instructor is available, supportive, and flexible.	x		
The instructor defines when students will receive responses to questions and establishes when unavailable, perhaps on the syllabus.	x		
Student-to-student and student-to-instructor communication occurs.	x		
The instructor creates a culture or forum in which students can build community and communicate, whether related to course content or not.	x		
The instructor establishes the specifics of own role in online discussions.		x	x
The instructor holds virtual office hours (synchronous chat sessions) or offers alternative methods to provide increased opportunities for interaction between students and with instructor.		x	
The instructor uses multiple communication methods (FTF, phone, or messaging) to communicate with students who have not participated in the initial days of the course or who have failed to maintain progress in the course.	x		
Assessment and Evaluation	All Courses	Online	Blended
Assignments are clearly explained.	x		
Students receive prompt feedback on assignments.	x		
Multiple assessment techniques appeal to different learning styles, to promote critical thinking skills, and to promote student-to-student interaction. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • group projects • exercises • research assignments • essays or essay questions • portfolios • discussion boards • peer review • case studies • journaling & blogging • traditional, proctored exams • open-book, electronic quizzes 	x		
The instructor provides sample work to illustrate assignment expectations.	x		
The instructor facilitates optional test review sessions preceding test dates.	x		
The instructor has a policy for resetting unsuccessful online test attempts.	x		
Students are given the opportunity to provide feedback on the content and the structure of the course.	x		