

---

# Best Practices for eLearning

---

SUSAN LOVETT, ED.D.

CUSTOM INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

A solid green horizontal bar at the bottom of the slide.

# Rationale for Online Courses/Programs

---

Why does your institution have online courses/programs or why are you considering it? What do you hope to accomplish by means of online that you aren't already accomplishing by traditional means?

- ❖ To make money?
- ❖ To save money?
- ❖ To attract new students?
- ❖ To keep students?
- ❖ To utilize qualified faculty?
- ❖ To offer residential students flexible scheduling?
- ❖ To alleviate facilities overload?
- ❖ To use class time more productively?
- ❖ To improve access to education?

# Three Tools to Measure Online Quality

---

## ❖ **Quality Online Course Initiative Rubric**

- ❖ University of Illinois – Illinois Online Network

- ❖ [www.ion.uillinois.edu](http://www.ion.uillinois.edu)

## ❖ **Quality Matters**

- ❖ International Consortium, originating out of Maryland

- ❖ [www.qualitymatters.org](http://www.qualitymatters.org)

## ❖ **Quality Scorecard**

- ❖ Online Learning Consortium

- ❖ [onlinelearningconsortium.org](http://onlinelearningconsortium.org)

# Challenge to Professional Development

---

- ❖ Qualified, Experienced Professionals
- ❖ Degree Programs
- ❖ Certificate Programs
- ❖ Professional Journals

# Best Practices

---

- ❖ Institutional Support
- ❖ Technology Support
- ❖ Course Development/Instructional Design (policy)
  - ❖ Course Structure (practice)
- ❖ Faculty Support
- ❖ Student Support
  - ❖ Social and Student Engagement
- ❖ Evaluation and Assessment

# Institutional Support

---

- ❖ Governing body makes clear decision to engage in online education
- ❖ Online education aligns with the mission and values of the institution
- ❖ Strategic plan of the institution includes online education and the strategic plan of online education aligns with the institution
- ❖ Resources are planned and allocated for online education
- ❖ Assessment is in place to ensure continuous improvement in online education
- ❖ Systems to verify student identification are in place
- ❖ Policies for intellectual property in regard to course materials are in place

# Technology Support

---

- ❖ Documented technology plan exists that includes electronic security measures and operational quality
- ❖ The technology delivery systems are highly reliable and use measureable standards such as system downtime tracking
- ❖ A centralized system provides support for building and maintaining the online education infrastructure
- ❖ The online education infrastructure is considered a critical institutional system
- ❖ Contingency plans are in place for service continuance in the event of prolonged service disruption
- ❖ Faculty, staff, and students are supported in the development and use of new technologies and skills
- ❖ Whether using in-house servers, hosted services, or cloud services, established data management practices and standards are observed which include provisions for backup, power protection, and disaster recovery plans

# Course Development/Instructional Design

---

- ❖ Guidelines regarding minimum requirements for course development, design, and delivery are followed (such as syllabus elements, course materials, assessment strategies, feedback requirements)
- ❖ Course embedded technology actively supports the achievement of learning outcomes and delivery of course content and isn't used just for technology's sake
- ❖ Course development process ensures that design supports student knowledge and skill development to meet measurable learning outcomes at course and program level
- ❖ Syllabi, instructional materials, assignments, and activities are reviewed periodically to ensure they align with course and program learning outcomes



# Course Development/Instructional Design

---

- ❖ Process is followed that ensures that appropriate permissions are obtained for the use of online course materials (Creative Commons, Copyright, Fair Use, Public Domain)
- ❖ Design is student-centered, student friendly, consistent in format from one course to another
- ❖ Design promotes faculty and student engagement
- ❖ Current and emerging technologies are evaluated according to their suitability to support learning
- ❖ Design follows Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAGs)
- ❖ Curriculum development is a core responsibility of the faculty

# Course Structure

---

- ❖ Transparency demonstrated by including as essential - syllabus with course objectives, learning outcomes, evaluation methods, books and supplies, technical and proctoring requirements, and other related course information
- ❖ Accessible library/learning resources regardless of student location
- ❖ Clear expectations for assignment completion, grade policy, and faculty response
- ❖ Links or explanations of technical support

# Course Structure

---

- ❖ Instructional materials are accessible to the student, easy to use, function on multiple operating systems and applications
- ❖ Instructional materials are accessible to students with disabilities via alternative instructional strategies or special resources
- ❖ Opportunities/tools are provided to encourage student-to-student collaboration
- ❖ Rules or standards for appropriate online student behavior are provided within the course

# Teaching and Learning

---

- ❖ Interactions between student and content, student to student, and faculty to student are essential, encouraged and facilitated
- ❖ Feedback on student assignments and questions is constructive, substantive and timely
- ❖ Students learn appropriate and scholarly methods of research in an online environment and are provided access to library professionals to assist with this process of analysis and evaluation
- ❖ Instructors use specific strategies to create a presence in the course

# Social and Student Engagement

---

- ❖ Students are provided opportunities to interact with other students in an online community

# Faculty Support

---

- ❖ Technical assistance is provided for faculty during online course development and online teaching
- ❖ Faculty receive training, assistance, and support to prepare for course development and teaching online which includes concepts such as fair use and plagiarism
- ❖ Faculty are provided ongoing professional development related to online teaching and learning including emerging technologies, new tools, and new resources
- ❖ Clear standards are established for faculty engagement and expectations concerning online teaching (response time, contact information, availability, grade turn around)
- ❖ Development and teaching of online courses is included in faculty load and compensation calculations

# Student Support

---

- ❖ Online program demonstrates a student focus by considering how their current structure might not be sufficient for the online student
- ❖ Efforts are made to engage the student with the program and institution to minimize feelings of isolation and alienation.

Before starting an online program students are advised to determine if...

- ❖ they possess the self-motivation and commitment to learn online
- ❖ they have access to the minimum technology skills and equipment
- ❖ they understand the admission requirements, tuition and fees, books and equipment required, technical and proctoring required, and what support is available to them

# Student Support

---

Throughout the program, students have access to...

- ❖ Training and information to access library resources and utilize electronic databases, etc.
- ❖ Tutorials for all forms of technologies used in course delivery
- ❖ Technical assistance and support staff
- ❖ Support personnel to address questions, problems, issues, and complaints
- ❖ Students are provided clear information for enlisting help from the institution.
- ❖ Effective academic, personal, and career counseling
- ❖ FAQs regarding online education



# Student Support

---

Throughout the program, students have access to...

- ❖ Non-instructional support services such as Admissions, Financial Aid, Registrar, Enrollment, etc.
- ❖ Disability support
- ❖ Required course materials in print or digital form, ISBN numbers, book suppliers and delivery options before course enrollment
- ❖ Tutoring is available as a learning resource.

# Evaluation and Assessment

---

- ❖ An evaluation process is in place that applies specific established standards, uses a variety of data for the purpose of regularly evaluating program effectiveness and guiding changes for continual improvement.
- ❖ Intended learning outcomes at course and program level are reviewed regularly to ensure alignment, clarity, utility, appropriateness, and effectiveness.
- ❖ Assessment includes review of recruitment practices, support services for faculty and students, accessibility standards, student retention, effectiveness of instruction
- ❖ Assessment data is collected from students, faculty, and other stakeholders.

---

Susan Lovett, Ed.D.

[slovett62@gmail.com](mailto:slovett62@gmail.com)

# Reference List

---