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About This Document

Cypress College Distance Education *Preparing for Course Evaluation* was developed as a resource for faculty members and division deans. This document was created using information from the Distance Education Faculty Basics† course, which in turn is based on the Cypress College Distance Education Course Quality Rubric, it includes:

- Ten characteristics of effective DE courses,
- Distance Education Course Evaluation logistics, and
- Checklists adapted from resources available in Distance Education Faculty Basics.

The Distance Education Program supports the negotiated evaluation process and promotes course, faculty, and program assessment as a means to create and maintain quality education for our students as well as to advance professional excellence in a distance education environment.

Get the Most Out of Distance Education Preparing for Course Evaluation

To get the most out of the information and checklists provided here, you should be familiar with the most current Cypress College DE Plan, the DE Course Quality Rubric, and have completed or reviewed Distance Education Faculty Basics. You may also wish to:

1. Participate in a conversation with your peers about what characterizes Distance Education Course Quality at Cypress College.
2. Tour a sample course. A large selection of courses is available from the Blackboard Exemplary Course Program (http://kb.blackboard.com/display/EXEMPLARY/Exemplary+Course+Program).
3. Review the Distance Education Course Evaluation logistics in advance of any formal course evaluation.

* This document is located on the Cypress College network at J:\Distance Education\DE Course Evaluation. **Accepted by the Academic Senate: 10/13/11**

† Distance Education Faculty Basics is the required basic training course for Cypress College faculty members who wish to teach online and hybrid courses.
Personalized Support

The Cypress College Distance Education staff is always ready to help online, on campus, or via a telephone.

In addition to the ongoing training opportunities offered as follow-up to Faculty Basics each semester, we provide:

- Faculty support for creating, updating, or improving a course site.
- Tours of Blackboard and other Distance Education software for those wishing more experience with these tools.

Distance Education Office Contact Information

The best way to reach us is by email. The Distance Education Office is located in the Faculty and Staff Service Center, northwest corner of the Bookstore building. Office hours are Monday through Thursday 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Stop by or call at 714-484-7052.

- Distance Education Dean: Steve Donley, sdonley@cypresscollege.edu
- Distance Education Coordinator: Jeanne Miller, jmiller@cypresscollege.edu
- Distance Education Administrative Assistant: Melisa Barrios, mbarrios@cypresscollege.edu
- Instructional Designer: Jessica Puma, jpuma@cypresscollege.edu
1. An effective DE course embraces the differences between teaching at a distance and traditional instruction.

Effective teaching, whether it takes place in-person or online, relies on many of the same best practices; however, it’s important to realize that the delivery method does impact the strategies used to facilitate successful learning. Yet, it’s critical to look beyond the technology and focus on the learning outcomes that define the course.

Designing for online or hybrid delivery is a matter of matching the appropriate delivery method to the course outcomes and remembering that the same standards of quality, currency, and assessment of student learning outcomes that apply to traditional on-campus courses also apply to distance education courses regardless of delivery method. (Chancellor's Office, Section 55202, p. 6., 2008 and NOCCCD Board Policies and Administrative Procedures, Web version Fall 2008).

Online & Hybrid Courses

Only courses that have been approved for instruction as an online or hybrid course through the campus curriculum process may count virtual instruction as official contact hours.

**Online Courses**: A course offered entirely online or a class that meets both online and in person for orientation and/or exams, but not for in-person instruction.

**Hybrid Courses**: Hybrid courses meet both on-campus and online. Required in-person class meetings are included in the schedule of classes following a predictable pattern, specifically, on the same day(s) of the week and at the same time of day.
2. An effective DE course is assessed keeping in mind the unique criteria that apply to a web-based learning environment

The Cypress College Distance Education Course Quality Rubric* describes commonly held best practices and legal requirements needed for the design of quality distance learning courses. The DE Program uses the rubric as a foundation for faculty training and professional development, and as a tool to gain a deeper understanding of the components that determine DE course quality at Cypress College. Effective course evaluation uses criteria that apply to the distance education environment and not to traditional face-to-face delivery (Palloff & Pratt, 2008, p. 3).

Cypress College DE Course Quality Rubric describes the following course elements, which define web-based instruction:

1. **Course Introduction**: CMS Orientation, Supportive Software, Course Orientation, Syllabus
2. **Course Design**: Objectives & Outcomes, Content Presentation & Navigation, Course Content, Learner Engagement, CMS Technology Use, DE Technology Use
4. **Assessment**: Assessment Expectations, Assessment Design, Self-Assessment
5. **Support & Feedback**: College Support Services, Technical Access & Support, 508 Accessibility, Feedback

* Available at http://www.cypresscollege.edu/rubric/
3. An effective DE course is assigned to an instructor who has completed Faculty Basics in time to be ready to teach

Distance Education *Faculty Basics* is simply that, a basic introduction to teaching online including the policies, software, and support resources unique to teaching at Cypress College. To have a successful first semester, new DE instructors will have completed this required training with enough time to fully develop an instructional course site and to be ready to teach their first Cypress College Distance Education course.

The *Faculty Basics Training Timeline* (Page 22) provides specific dates for each semester indicating the rate of progress recommended for a faculty member to be able to successfully prepare to teach their first DE course.

| Instructors who do not meet the final deadline for completion of Faculty Basics will not be eligible to teach a Distance Education online or hybrid course. (Cypress College DE Plan, 2009, p. 21) |
4. An effective DE course is facilitated by an instructor who is certified at Cypress College

The Cypress College *DE Faculty Basics* is a prerequisite to teaching a DE course. As the name suggests, it is only the starting point to quality teaching at a distance. Faculty Basics is equivalent to a three (3)-unit class.

It is designed to develop the *minimum* competencies needed to teach in the distance education environment. Equivalent credit on the salary schedule is available through NOCCCD Human Resources (HR), when requested following the established HR procedures.

Upon the successful completion of Faculty Basics an instructor will

- Learn about the Cypress College online requirements
- Be able to navigate Blackboard as a student
- Build a basic Blackboard course site, and,
- Teach using effective distance education techniques in a course management system

In addition to this required training, DE faculty members are expected to pursue supplementary learning opportunities to increase skills and knowledge in areas specifically applicable to learning at a distance in their academic discipline. (Cypress College DE Plan, 2009, p. 21)
5. An effective DE course takes more time to teach than a traditional in-person course

Distance teaching requires a time commitment different from those needed for traditional in-person teaching. According to one report it may take 49 to 79 hours of development time for each hour of eLearning output to create basic online learning including, text, graphics, slide presentations, simple audio, and test questions. (Chapman, 2010)

This work time is in addition to the teaching time, office hours, and grading time devoted to a course. Teaching online takes longer, perhaps up to twice as long as a traditional in-person course and, “…the number of students in online classes predicts the time spent by the instructor at a directly proportional rate, 2) online time on task is tied directly to the course quality, and 3) time demands for even small online courses exceed those for in-class courses.” (Cavanaugh, 2005)
6. An effective DE course is defined by regular and consistent interaction

Although effective and regular interaction seems an obvious aspect of an in-person course, it is such important a component of a quality DE course, that it in fact defines distance education. Not only does substantive human interaction define distance education for accreditation purposes (ACCJC, p. 3, 2010), high levels of interaction are also associated with increased student achievement, engagement, and retention.

Effective DE course interactions must include:

- Student-content interaction
- Student-peer interaction
- Instructor-student interaction

Seven Principles for Good Practice

What does interaction look like on the web? Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education applied to distance education in Seven Principles of Effective Teaching: A Practical Lens for Evaluating Online Courses (Graham, et. al, 2001) offers the following insights:

1. Good Practice Encourages **Student-Faculty Contact**: Instructors should provide clear guidelines for interaction with students.
2. Good Practice Encourages **Cooperation Among Students**: Well-designed discussion assignments facilitate meaningful cooperation among students.
3. Good Practice Encourages **Active Learning**: Students should present course projects.
4. Good Practice Gives Prompt **Feedback**: Instructors need to provide two types of feedback: information feedback and acknowledgment feedback.
5. Good Practice Emphasizes **Time on Task**: Online courses need deadlines.
6. Good Practice Communicates **High Expectations**: Challenging tasks, sample cases, and praise for quality work communicate high expectations.
7. Good Practice **Respects Diverse Talents and Ways of Learning**: Allowing students to choose project topics incorporates diverse views into online courses.

For more
For more on effective Distance Education teaching strategies please see the Teaching with Blackboard section of DE Faculty Basics.
7. An effective DE course uses, at minimum, the basic tools necessary for teaching at a distance

There are many tools available to facilitate quality teaching and learning at a distance. The essential tools include course management system (CMS) and productivity software.

**Blackboard is the Official Cypress College CMS**

Blackboard is the official Cypress College course management system for DE online and hybrid courses. Benefits to using Blackboard include reliable uptime, an extensive list of robust features and tools, and a ready to use framework that supports authentication, accessibility, copyright, and FERPA guidelines. It’s also fairly easy to learn for both faculty members and students, and ensures a consistency that helps a student transition from one course to another.

While a few faculty members may choose to use publisher sites or other commercial and free web services to deliver their Distance Education courses, the DE program highly recommends that all online and hybrid courses be taught using Blackboard. A faculty member using a publisher site and/or other commercial or free web services must comply with all DE related laws and guidelines. A DE faculty member is also responsible for all student orientation, technical support, and troubleshooting on sites such as these.

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For detailed instructions on how to use Blackboard please take the *Cypress College Blackboard Student Orientation*. To access the orientation go to cypresscollege.blackboard.com. Then, login to the orientation site with the Username: @12345678 and the Password: cypress.

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**Cypress College DE 508 Accessibility Suite**

The following software is available through VDI (the Academic Computing virtual server).

- **Microsoft Office 2010**: for the creation of accessible Word and PowerPoint files.
- **Adobe Acrobat X**: for the production and testing of accessible PDF files.
- **LecShare Pro**: for the creation and repair of PowerPoint files and accessible narrated PowerPoint presentations.
- **TechSmith Camtasia**: for the creation of captioned desktop video.

**Turnitin.com**

Turnitin is a web-based program for originality checking and plagiarism prevention. It allows instructors and students to check written work for improper citation or misappropriated content. Accounts are available from the Staff Development Coordinator.

**CCC Confer**

The state Chancellor's office provides a conferencing, office hour, presentation site where instructors can communicate online with students in real time. It is available for conference calls as well as for office hours and presentations at http://www.cccconfer.org/.
8. An effective DE course is learner centered and presented in different ways and formats

Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which evolved from universal design in architecture, was developed as a means to enable disabled persons full participation in their education. When first encountering UDL you may see it referenced by the terms of its various permutations, including "...universal design in education, universal access design, universal learner-centered approach for instruction, universal curriculum access, and the more commonly used terms UDL and UDI." (Maguire, Scott, and Shaw, 2006, p. 172)

Just as universal design benefits everyone, not just persons with disabilities, so too does inclusive instructional design facilitate learning for a diverse population of students. Putting Universal Design for Learning into practice means that you consider the needs of students first. Design of instruction and instructional materials should be inclusive and meet the needs of the widest range of learner diversity as possible.

3 UDL Principles

When you apply UDL to course design you consider representation, engagement, and expression by:

- Presenting course content in different ways and formats.
- Creating multiple opportunities to engage students in your course.
- Allowing students to express their learning in different ways.

How to be Learner Centered

- **Articulate the process of learning.** Involve students in a discussion about your approach to learning. Explain what and why you do what you do in class and how you expect a student to take responsibility for learning. (Moore, Fowler, and Watson, 2007)

- **Promote active learning.** Promote student involvement by "...substituting active learning experiences for lectures, holding students responsible for material that has not been explicitly discussed in class, assigning open-ended problems and problems requiring critical or creative thinking that cannot be solved by following text examples, involving students in simulations and role-plays, assigning a variety of unconventional writing exercises, and using self-paced and/or cooperative (team-based) learning." (Felder and Brent, 1996)

- **Build community.** Make learning an interdependent experience by creating assignments and projects that require students to work in learning communities to support and learn from one another. (Angelino, Willimans, and Natvig, 2007).
9. An effective DE course is usable

When you design a site with the end user in mind, it’s called user-centered. Usability is the measure of the ease in which a person can use the functions and features of an object or web site. In a Blackboard course site, usability specifically refers to the degree to which a student can effortlessly find information, achieve course goals, and complete required tasks.

The following are a few basic learner-centered usable design best practices:

At the Course Site Level

- Design navigation to be meaningful from a student’s perspective and lead to critical tasks in the course site
- Logically sequence content and allow students to get from point A to point Z easily and back again
- Present all content in modular units of information (modules, units, chapters, or lessons)
- Make all essential functions available without leaving the course site

At the Page & Document Level

- Put the most important information at the top of the page
- Use headings to create page sections
- Use lists and keep them short
- Use bulleted lists for miscellaneous items
- Use numbered lists only for steps and instructions
- Write using plain language, addressing one person, not a group
- Break up large amounts of information on one page into smaller chunks on multiple pages
- Left align text to ensure a high level of readability
- Favor the creation of multiple readable pages rather fewer dense pages
- Never use color alone to convey meaning
- Choose few fonts to create a credible professional presentation
- Add alternative text for all images
10. An effective DE course is 508 compliant

The standards that define web accessibility have been established by Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, which mandate equal access for individuals with disabilities. These standards are also based on the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) which explain how to make content on a site accessible.

It’s up to a faculty member who creates information destined for the web to distribute accessible content whether it resides on a campus homepage, portal, or course management system.

Frequently Asked Questions & Answers from the Distance Education Access Guidelines

The Distance Education Access Guidelines (2011) issued by the State Chancellor’s Office provide the conceptual framework, legal requirements, and specific guidelines for electronic information. And, while this document is targeted at Distance Education, the guidelines also apply to courses that are not designated as distance education. The following sample FAQs are directed to answering faculty questions about course accessibility.

- **Do I really have to make my course accessible?**
  
  Yes. (p. 29)

- **If I have no disabled students in my course, do I still have to make it accessible?**
  
  Yes. (p. 30)

- **I send my students to many sites on the web. Am I responsible if those sites aren’t accessible? What do I do if they are not accessible?**
  
  Required course materials must be provided in an accessible format. (p. 34)

- **The files I upload into my course are mainly Microsoft Word, PowerPoint files, and also Adobe PDF files. Are those accessible?**
  
  In general, the safe answer is no. (p. 34)

- **I am an adjunct instructor. Am I required to make my course accessible?**
  
  Yes. (p. 35)
Basic Techniques for Accessible Content in a CMS

Basic Techniques For Text

• Create a logical page structure using headings, lists, and paragraphs that make sense.
• Never rely on color alone to convey information.
• Rely on high contrast between text and background to enhance readability.
• Use fonts that are easily readable on the screen such as Verdana, Trebuchet MS, and Georgia.
• Avoid blinking, moving text, or animated images to convey meaning; it distracts from the content of the page and depending on the blinking rate, may cause seizures in some users.

Basic Techniques For Links

• Use unique and unambiguous link titles so all users know what to expect when they click.
• Provide clear information when linking to a file that describes the size and type of file.
• Avoid opening links in a new window, unless you provide a clear warning.

Basic Techniques For Images

• Code all images on the page using a textual equivalent. An alternative text tag, also known as an alt tag, is the textual depiction of an image and should convey the function, purpose or meaning of the image, and not the literal description of the image.
• Don’t use images as decorations; instead use them to enhance the learning material they are presented with.

Microsoft Word Documents, PDF Files, and Multimedia

• A word-processed file, such as Microsoft Word document, is generally not accessible and usable with a screen reader without the appropriate tags.
• PDF files are accessible when they are tagged with appropriate accessibility markup.
• Equivalent alternatives for any multimedia presentation must be synchronized with the presentation, for example, includes synchronized captions for videos.

To learn more about best practices in accessible instructional materials design see the Summary for Accessibility and Usability Best Practices in the Accessibility and Usability section of DE Faculty Basics.
DISTANCE EDUCATION COURSE EVALUATION CHECKLISTS

A course site review may include some or all of the items listed in the checklists that follow.

Course Evaluation Steps

As a DE instructor being evaluated you will need to assist your dean or designee (evaluator) with the following information. You may also wish to meet in-person for a course site tour or to review relevant course materials.

Course Information Provided to Your Dean or Designee (Evaluator)

☐ Login Credentials:
  - Change the password of your student account for the evaluator’s use for the specific time frame when the evaluation will take place.
  - Provide the evaluator your student username and password.
  - Reset your student password when the evaluation has been completed.

☐ Course Title: Provide the exact title of the course as it appears in Blackboard

☐ Evaluation Time Period: Specify the time period for access to a current lesson. Evaluators will typically want to be able to follow, at minimum, one comprehensive lesson from beginning to end.

☐ Course Syllabus Location: Share the location of the syllabus in the Blackboard site.

☐ Course Orientation: Point out the location and components of the course orientation including the course management system orientation and the course discipline information.

☐ Faculty Home Page: Provide the URL to your DE faculty home page on the Cypress College website. All DE faculty members are required to have a College home page.

☐ Additional Information: Provide any additional information you may like to include to explain the DE course and/or document student/instructor interactions.

Student Evaluation Information Provided to DE Coordinator

DE Student surveys may be administered using a Blackboard course site managed by the Distance Education Coordinator. The survey questions are exactly the same as those in the instrument used in an in-person class. All student responses are anonymous.

Survey Set Up Process

1. Your dean or designee (evaluator) will request the DE Coordinator set up the student survey.
2. The DE Coordinator will notify you when the evaluation is ready and request that you inform students and ask them to participate. Students will be enrolled in the evaluation course site and will see the course on the Blackboard My Cypress College tab in the My Courses module.

Survey Results

☐ Tenured Faculty Results: Contact the DE Coordinator to request the results once course grades have been submitted.

☐ Probationary & Adjunct Faculty Results: Results for adjunct faculty members will be sent to the evaluator at the evaluator’s request.
Course Site Checklist

Adapted from *Faculty Basics Competency 29: Course Site Checklist Prototype & Development Plan*

### Course Menu

- Navigation link titles are meaningful from a student’s perspective
- Menu links are functional and create paths to critical tasks in the course site
- Link titles are unambiguous, short, and written in plain language
- Links are easy to read and have a high contrast between the text and background color
- Course menu includes a link to instructor information
- Course menu includes a link to the *A to Z Students Services* (“CC Student Services”)
- Course menu includes a link to course announcements

### Syllabus Presentation

- 508 compliant digital version of the syllabus is available in the course site
- A link labeled Syllabus is on the main course navigation or is easily found in the course site

### Course Content Organization

- Content is easy to find and allows students to get from point A to point Z easily and back again
- Content is logically sequenced
- Course content is presented in modular units of information (module, unit, lesson)

### Course Content Presentation

- Content presentation includes headings, lists, and other accessible content presentation techniques
- Font design and color choices create a credible professional presentation and easy readability
- Unit or module design is consistent for ease of student use and to facilitate production
- Large amounts of information are broken up into smaller chunks on multiple HTML pages
- Images serve an instructional purpose or enhance student interaction with course content

### Course Content Accessibility & Functionality

- Color alone is not used to convey meaning
- Required files are 508 compliant and are functional
- All essential functions are available without leaving the course site
Page and Document Checklist
Adapted from the *Faculty Basics Learner-Centered Usability Unit*

The following content presentation basics may apply to a page created within Blackboard, a word-processed document, a PDF, and a web page.

**Information Placement**
- Puts the most important information at the top of the page
- Keeps the information viewable to students without having to scroll

**Heads**
- Uses headings to create page sections
- Writes headings to convey key information
- Organize headings so they flow in a logical order and tell a coherent story

**Lists**
- Keeps lists short
- Uses bulleted lists for miscellaneous items
- Uses numbered lists for sequences

**Plain Language**
- Breaks up dense pages into multiple pages
- Presents content organized in short, separate topics or points
- Writes to one person, not a group

**Page Length and Information**
- Breaks up large amounts of information on one page into smaller chunks on multiple pages
- Labels pages with meaningful titles
- Left aligns text to ensure a high level of readability

**White Space**
- Favors the creation of multiple readable pages rather fewer dense pages
- Adds white space between headings and paragraphs, as margins, and between all other elements of the page

**Color**
- Designs in black and white and use color for emphasis
- Selects bright colors with high contrast
- Never uses color alone to convey meaning that cannot be perceived by a person with visual disabilities or color blindness

**Fonts**
- Sticks to common fonts like Times New Roman, Arial, or Verdana which usually exist on a user’s computer system
- Chooses few fonts to create a credible professional presentation
- Uses the default Blackboard text size (HTML font size = 3) to allow students to control screen font size

**Images**
- Avoids animations that do not provide course related information
- Uses images with a small download size
- Adds alternative text for all images
# Course Syllabus Checklist

Adapted from *Cypress College DE Faculty Basics Competency 26: Syllabus Checklist*

This is a list of all required and some recommended items from the Curriculum Committee Guidelines (May, 2010), the DE syllabus requirements (DE Plan, 2008-2011), the Distance Education Course Quality Rubric, and Cypress College Distance Education Faculty Basics.

*Recommended by Curriculum, ** Recommended by DE, all others are required items.

## Course Information
- Course Title and Name of College
- Course Prefix and Number
- CRN Number(s)*
- Semester and Year
- Scheduled Time and Location of Class and/or Lab
- Catalog Description
- Type of DE Course explaining the official designation as an online or hybrid course
- Student Friendly Course Description**
- Course Objectives preceded by: “Upon completion of the course you will be able to”
- SLOs

## Instructor Information
- Instructor Name
- Office Location
- Voice Mail
- Email Address
- Faculty Home Page URL
- Office Hours
- Contact Hours specifying expectations for responsiveness and availability
- Instructor Role & Responsibilities and/or philosophy statement**

## Course Requirements
- Schedule Class Meeting Times
- Physical Class Location
- Online Class Location
- Prerequisites, Co-requisites, Advisories
- Textbooks
- Required Materials and Supplies

## Computer Requirements & On-Campus Labs
- Computer Skills necessary to be successful in the course
- Computer Equipment and Requirements
- Availability of On-campus Computers

## Tips for Online Success
- Student Role & Responsibilities**
- List of the specific skills necessary to be successful in this course with links to online resources

## Class Schedules for Topics, Assignments, and Due Dates
- Course Topics*
- Assignment Schedule and Due Dates
- Assignment Location in CMS
- Assignment Announcement expectations for new postings or changes in schedule
- Testing Dates
Course Policies

☐ Grading Policy
☐ Standards and Procedures for Coursework Evaluation*
☐ Attendance and Absence Policy
☐ Participation Policy including course decorum, behavior, and netiquette
☐ Academic Honesty Policy referencing the College catalog and student authentication
☐ Student Grievances
☐ Copyright Notice
☐ Disabled Students Program and Services (DSPS) Notice
☐ Food/Beverage Policy & Tobacco Use Policy*
☐ Electronic Devices Policy*
☐ Sexual Harassment/Discrimination Policy with reference to the College catalog

Student Services

☐ Reference the Student Support Services list in the Schedule of Classes
☐ Provide links to student services on the Cypress College website
☐ Academic Counseling & Student Development, including the Online Counseling page
☐ Disabled Students Program and Services (DSPS) Health Center
☐ Campus Safety Phone Number*
☐ Emergency Procedures*
☐ Student Rights and Responsibilities*

Academic Support Services

☐ Provide links to academic support service information on the Cypress College website
☐ Library
☐ Learning Resource Center (LRC)

Resources & Supplementary Materials

☐ Resources*
☐ Supplementary materials that will support or guide student success**

Syllabus Presentation in the CMS

☐ Accessible digital version available in the course site
☐ Multiple accessible formats available including at least HTML and downloadable versions*
☐ A link labeled Syllabus is on the main course navigation*
☐ Multimedia or interactive content is included*

Syllabus Assessment

☐ Acknowledgement of receipt of syllabus, such as a sign-up sheet*
☐ Required syllabus quiz**

* Recommended by Curriculum
** Recommended by DE, all others are required
Course Module (Lesson) Checklist

Adapted from *Cypress College DE Faculty Basics Competency 28: Course Plan Module Requirements*

This is a model for a module or lesson. Not every model or lesson may include all of these elements; however they should be present in the course as a whole.

**Pre-Instruction**

- **Introduction**: An overview and description of the learning unit. In a hybrid course the transition and flow from online to in-person work is apparent and clear to a student.

- **Outcomes & Objectives**: A list of the official course objectives, unique objectives, and course student learning outcomes. Outcomes and objectives clearly relate to learning activities and assessments.

- **Assessment Expectations**: Assessment expectations and references to rubrics and examples of successful student work.

**Learning Activities**

- **Content Interactions**: The learning activities designed for student-content interaction. Content interaction should motivate students; connect what they already know with new knowledge to be learned, introduce and model new knowledge and skills, and provide opportunities for guided and independent practice.

- **Instructor-Student Interactions**: Strategies for instructor social presence and instructor-student interactions.

- **Student Interactions**: Strategies and learning activities that foster interaction between students. Student-student(s) interactions must be represented as a means of creating a sense of community among student peers as well as learning outcome achievement.

- **Self-Assessment**: Learning activities that promote increased achievement of learning goals, self-assessment, and reflection.

- **Summary and Review**: Methods used to brief the class on what has been learned and summarize the learning that has occurred.

**Assessment Activities**

- Graded assessments of student learning that measure achievement of objectives and related outcomes.

**Extension of Learning**

- Activities and resources to enrich advanced students and for students who need more help to be successful, including remedial, supplemental learning, and resources for further exploration.
Accessibility & Usability Checklist

Adapted from the Cypress College DE Faculty Basics Competency 7: Accessible & Usable Content Creation

This document lists the minimum requirements to create a Microsoft Word file and a PDF file applying usability and accessibility design guidelines. Information provided here for a Microsoft Word file also applies to content created directly in the Blackboard text editor.

The Distance Education program periodically offers workshops on accessible document creation. This information is also available in Faculty Basics which is available to all College faculty members.

A Word Document

Structure

Faculty Basics: Accessibility & Usability > Web Accessibility & Usability Basics > Accessible Word Tutorial: Document Structure

☐ Heading Use: Headings are used to separate the document in logical sections and subsections and are titled so as to support effective scanning of the syllabus.

☐ Heading Hierarchy: Headings flow from H1 in a logical and consistent pattern.

☐ Heading Formatting: Headings are created using the appropriate style and are not manually formatted.

☐ Heading Spacing: There are no empty paragraphs used as spacers, instead the heading styles have been modified to include space before and after.

☐ Heading 1: There is only one Heading 1 used to label the title of the document.

Layout

Faculty Basics: Accessibility & Usability > Web Accessibility & Usability Basics > Accessible Word Tutorial: Define your Layout & Text

☐ Table Use: Tables are used to organize data that requires display in rows and columns to enable meaning and not for formatting. Tables have a heading defined in the table properties.

☐ Text Boxes: Text boxes are not used.

☐ Columns: If columns are used they are defined in the code using Format > Column.

☐ White Space: Document makes liberal use of white space to improve readability.

Image

Faculty Basics: Accessibility & Usability > Web Accessibility & Usability Basics > Accessible Word Tutorial: Images

☐ Alternative Text: The alternative text is correctly entered and accurately states the function of the image.
Text

Faculty Basics: Accessibility & Usability > Web Accessibility & Usability Basics > Accessible Word Tutorial: Text

☐ Paragraph Style: Paragraph text is created using the “Normal” paragraph style.

☐ Paragraph Spacing: There are no empty paragraphs used as spacers, instead the paragraph style has been modified to include space before and after a “Normal” paragraph.

☐ Text Color: Text does not rely on color to convey information. Colors are used sparingly and does not distract from the content itself.

☐ Font: Very few screen readable fonts are used. Font choices create text that does not compete with the readability of the content.

☐ Font Size: Text size is easy to read.

☐ Spacing: There is only one space after any punctuation mark. If this is not yet true in your document please consider adopting this standard practice when you are word processing or working in Blackboard.

Hyperlinks

Faculty Basics: Accessibility & Usability > Web Accessibility & Usability Basics > Accessible Word Tutorial: Text

☐ Meaningful Link Titles: Link titles are meaningful when read aloud out of context and let users to know what to expect when they click.

☐ Function: Links work and take the user to the correct location online.

☐ Print Ready: The hyperlink is a meaningful text, however the URL is included separately so it can be read in a printed document; for example: Cypress College Home Page (www.cypresscollege.edu).

A PDF Document

Faculty Basics: Accessibility & Usability > Web Accessibility & Usability Basics > Accessible PDF Tutorial: PDF Testing

☐ General Accessibility: All structure, layout, image, text, and hyperlink guidelines that apply to a Word document also appear in the PDF file created from the originating Word document.

☐ Adobe Accessibility Check: Adobe Acrobat accessibility check finds no errors or issues.

☐ 508 Accessibility Check: Adobe Acrobat 508 accessibility check finds no errors or issues.

Multimedia

☐ All multimedia is 508 compliant.

☐ All video and multimedia is provided with synchronous captions

☐ Transcripts are provided for audio only media
Cypress College Distance Education Faculty Basics Training Timeline 2011 -2012

About this Timeline – Online & Hybrid Faculty Training

The final deadlines are absolute; all other dates are approximate and subject to change based on funding availability.

This timeline is provided to help you plan for success as you work through the five modules of the Cypress College Distance Education Faculty Basics course. The dates below indicate the rate of progress recommended for you to be able to complete the training with enough time to fully develop your instructional course site and to be ready to teach your first Cypress College Distance Education course.

What Does “Complete” Mean?

For each module to be considered complete means that you have:

- Acquired the module information and worked through each of the module activities
- Practiced new skills on your own
- Completed and submitted all competencies for that module
- Contacted the instructor for help when needed and when competencies require review
- Revised a competency to meet the required standards when needed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Dates to meet to eligible to teach DE Summer 2012</th>
<th>To eligible to teach DE Fall 2012</th>
<th>To eligible to teach DE Spring 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete DE Requirements Module</td>
<td>February 3, 2012</td>
<td>February 24, 2012</td>
<td>May 18, 2012 August 3, 2012*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Teaching with Blackboard Module</td>
<td>March 16, 2012</td>
<td>April 13, 2012</td>
<td>September 30, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Deadline**</td>
<td>April 6, 2012</td>
<td>May 16, 2012</td>
<td>October 29, 2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This alternate date is valid only if there is DE Staff funding and availability during Summer 2012.

**If you do not meet the final deadline noted above you will not be eligible to teach a DE course in the semester intended.** (Cypress College DE Plan, 2009, p. 21) Please refer to the Distance Education Plan for details on DE requirements at Cypress College.
References


Cypress College. (2009). Cypress College Distance Education Plan. Retrieved from Cypress College Web site: J:\Distance Education\DE Plan. The current plan is available online under Planning Documents on the Cypress College Institutional Research web site at http://www.cypresscollege.edu/about/InstitutionalResearch/pdocuments.aspx


