

Centre for Teaching Excellence Online Course Quality Checklist

Criteria	Criteria Met?
Section 1: Orientation to the Online Environment	
1. Instructions on how to get started and where to find course components are clear and easy to find when students log into eLearn/Teams. Written instructions are ideally complemented by a short video orienting students to the space.	
2. The syllabus is posted and easy to find.	
3. Expectations and requirements for participation, online discussions, email, chat, and other forms of interaction are clearly articulated in the syllabus and in initial communication with students.	
4. A clear statement regarding the importance of respecting the privacy of each student and the instructor in the online course environment is included.	
5. Technology requirements for the course are clearly stated, including where to find help, and information/links to access the technology are provided to students.	
6. Resources required for the course are explicitly stated, and information provided on where/how to get required resources.	
7. Initial module and the syllabus provide guidelines on how to succeed as a student in an online environment, and specifically in this course.	
8. The course instructions make it clear how the university's student support services can be accessed (Counselling, library etc.).	
Section 2: A Safe & Welcoming Learning Space (Community)	
1. Icebreaker activities in addition to small large group interactions and intentional peer-to-peer connection activities are included throughout the course.	
2. The instructor has provided a personal introduction and/or bio in one or more formats (i.e. written, image and/or video).	
3. Instructor acknowledges their own ancestry and the traditional lands they are on.	
4. Expectations for behaviour and respectful communication are explicitly stated as part of the syllabus, and the introductory module. While some group guidelines may be created with the students, the instructor has clearly set the tone.	
5. Students are asked to introduce themselves to the class through video, images and/or text.	
Section 3: Host Virtual Office Hours	
1. Instructor is available at scheduled times during the week, and actively encourages students to join live chats or virtual office hours i.e. via MS Teams or WebEx.	
2. Online office hours are used for social connection as well as reviews, Q&As or mini tutorials as needed.	
3. Instructor encourages individuals and groups to book times to discuss assignments live online.	
Section 4: Instructor Presence	
1. Instructor interacts and engages with students and class at key times in a learning activity, keeps discussions on track, synthesizes class discussions, guides and asks questions to deepen or further learning.	
2. Instructor is responsive and predictable in answering student questions and replying to emails concerning online discussion throughout the week.	
3. Instructor uses multiple modalities to be present and to guide students, i.e. synchronous, asynchronous, text, video, images etc.	
4. Students appear confident asking questions about the course content and assignments.	
5. Clear standards are set for instructor responsiveness and availability (turn-around time for email, return of assignments, etc.)	

Section 5: Module Structure	
1. The course is organized into modules/weeks/days with clearly defined and aligned learning outcomes, activities and formative assessment for each module.	
2. Module/unit learning outcomes describe what the student will be able to do.	
3. There is a logical progression or scaffolding of learning from module to module, ideally complemented by a visual road map.	
4. Course content and recourses are clear, appropriately cited and copyright cleared as relevant.	
Section 6: Weekly Flow & Navigation	
1. Each week or module follows a similar structure so students know what to expect.	
2. Navigation throughout the course and each week is logical, consistent, and efficient.	
3. Bullet points and/or a task list clearly tells students the activities they need to engage in for each module.	
Section 7: Technology Supports and Advances Learning	
1. All tools and media support the learning outcomes and have a clear purpose.	
2. Technology or media used in the course consider formats and standards accessible to all students.	
3. Tools and technology used are FOIPPA compliant. If not, students are clearly instructed not to post any personal data.	
4. Instructions for how to use tools and media and how to get support are available.	
5. No more than one new tool or platform is introduced per week (with the exception of first week/day).	
6. If synchronous classes or tutorials are included, they are recorded and archived for students to review.	
7. Course tools are readily available to students and supported by the university (eLearn, WebEx, Teams). Links are provided and instructions on how to get them are included.	
8. Course tools provide learner engagement and opportunities for active learning.	
Section 8: Proactive Check-ins with Students	
1. Instructor proactively reaches out with a personal and/or encouraging note to individual students if they seem to disappear or be missing an aspect of the course learning activities.	
2. Course offers structured opportunities to check in on students' learning, engagement and social/emotional health through weekly temperature checks, quick surveys and formative assessments.	
3. Instructor ensures each student feels seen and cared for throughout the course via "mentions" in a summary announcement, an encouraging comment in a forum or a small personal message.	
Section 9: Opportunities for Varied Learning Experiences	
1. Content, assignments and learning activities frequently offer students choices for how to solve a problem, meet a weekly learning goal or complete an assignment.	
2. Content, assignments and learning activities frequently take advantage of multiple modalities, asynchronous and synchronous activities and combinations or text, visuals and short video clips.	
3. A variety of active learning experiences, such as peer-to-peer discussions, cases, role-plays, games and student-generated content frequently allow students to cement new knowledge in more than one way.	
4. Learning activities create opportunities for different types of interaction (instructor-student, content-student, student-student).	
Section 10: Feedback & Assessment	
1. The learning activities and assessments are consistent with the learning outcomes.	
2. Course evaluation or grading profile is clear and appropriate/adapted to an online format and offers flexibility when possible.	
3. Specific and descriptive criteria/rubrics are provided for the evaluation of students' work and participation.	



4. Assessments are conducted on an ongoing basis throughout the course including ungraded self-check quizzes for practicing knowledge/fact retrieval in content/knowledge heavy courses.	
5. Clear instructions are provided on how and where to submit assignments.	
6. Self- and/or peer assessment is part of course to support self-directed learning and community building.	
7. Course uses a variety of assessment types to allow students to demonstrate their knowledge/skills in different ways (e.g. artifacts, posters or infographics, concept maps, ePortfolios, presentations, slideshows, reflective video responses, written responses, data interpretation and analysis).	
8. Feedback is offered in different formats including written, audio- or video- recorded.	
9. Instructor takes the opportunity to provide feedback to the entire class in announcements, emails or summaries and/or as part of synchronous check-ins.	

This document aligns with the CTE Guidelines for Effective Online Teaching – The Ten Essentials. It is inspired and adapted from the Quality Matters Higher Education Rubric and from SFU's Online Course Quality Checklist

