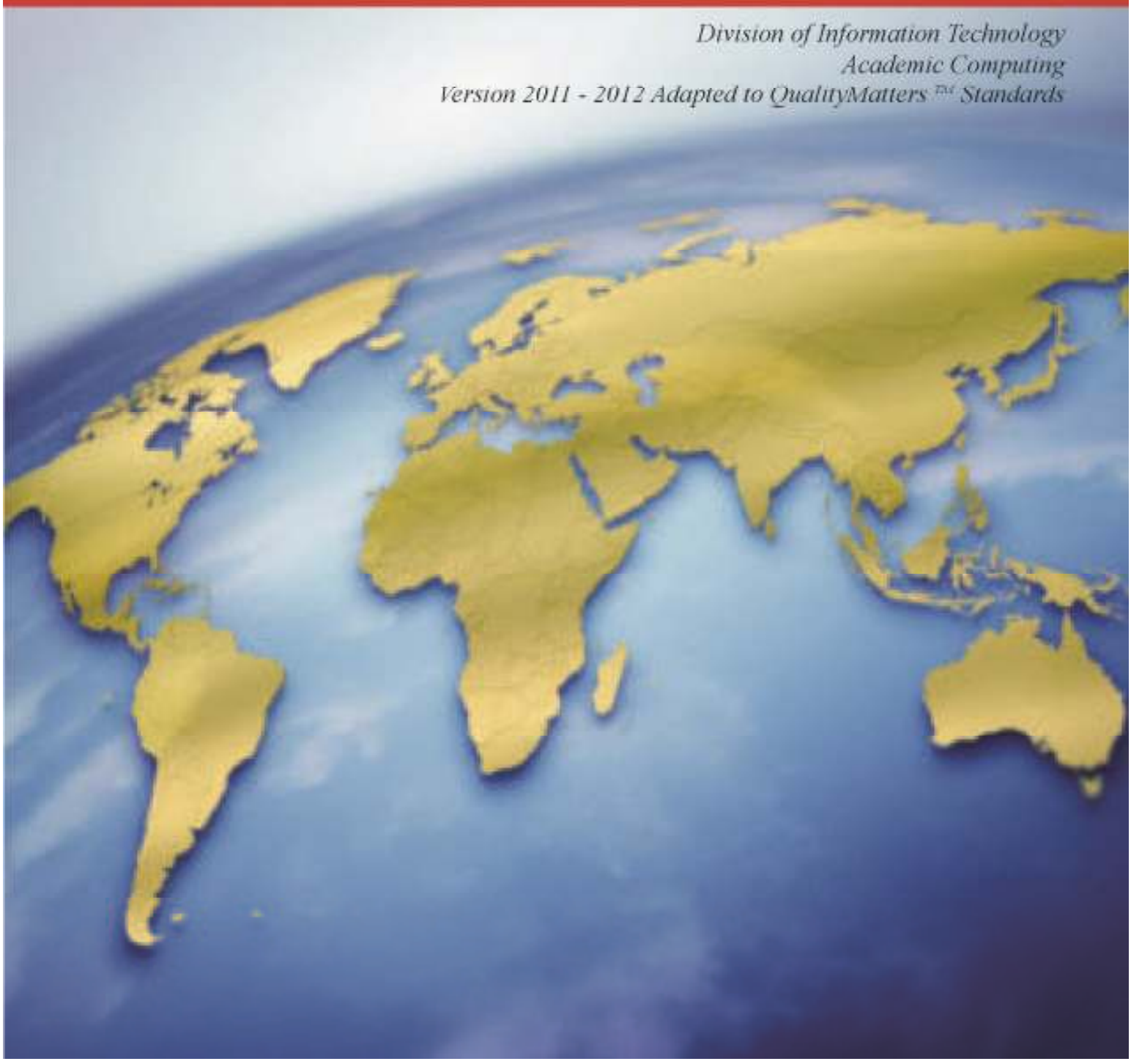
Online and Hybrid Course Development at Bowie State University

Division of Information Technology
Academic Computing
Version 2011 - 2012 Adapted to QualityMatters™ Standards



Notice of Authors

This manual has been elaborated by Education and Instructional Technology professionals of the Academic Computing Unit of Bowie State University (BSU). It covers technical aspects and best pedagogical practices of online learning. Its main use is intended as a guide for developing online and hybrid courses and training activities associated to these functions. The first version of the manual was published in 2008; it has been updated and will continue to be updated according to the changes in learning management systems and ancillary tools that take place in the institution.

Fabio Chacon, Ph.D., Director of Academic Computing and DE,
with contributions about assistive technology and copyright by Marian Hawken, M. Ed., Instructional Technologist.

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For whom is this manual intended

Through use of this manual, Bowie State University attempts to regulate the development of online and hybrid courses delivered by means of the course management system used in the institution, which is Blackboard ANGEL as of FY2012. Primary users of this manual are the following:

- *Faculty*, in their function of course developers and online instructors
- *Contracted course developers,* people appointed for production of specific courses during a specified time
- *Instructional designers,* professionals that provide advice and support regarding the pedagogy and instructional technology aspects of the courses
- *Contracted instructional designers*, same as above but contracted only for specific courses on temporary bases.

Why online and hybrid courses at BSU?

Online Learning has had an extraordinary growth at Higher Education institutions in the United States in the initial decades of the 21st Century. The well-known reporting source Sloan-C consortium (sloanconsortium.org) indicates in their annual report of 2010 that by the end of 2009 more than 5.6 million college students in the US were taking online courses. In addition, the online modality of learning had grown 21% in the first decade of the Century while the global enrollment in Higher Education had grown only 2%. In these circumstances, online learning is rather a survival requirement for BSU than an optional mode of instruction. On the other hand, the University System of Maryland establishes benchmarks for every member institution about the percentage of credit units that they should offer through alternate modes of instruction; for BSU the benchmark is 10% and by 2010 the institution had reached 5.8%, which means there is still a substantial opportunity for growth.

In concordance with these trends and the USM mandate, our university has incorporated in both the Strategic Plan and the Academic Development Plan FY2010-2015 the goals of increasing online learning offerings and evaluating their effectiveness. Specifically, the latter document establishes the following:

"***Strategic Plan Goal 1 Provide high quality and affordable academic programs and support services for students.***

Objective 1 – I. Increase undergraduate and graduate distance education opportunities to provide alternative modes of instruction to students."

What are online or hybrid courses?

Online learning is the contemporary version of distance education, also called "distance learning" or "open learning." In this educational modality, the majority of interactions between students and instructor, among the student themselves and with the content of the subject matter, occur in the virtual environment of a course management system; namely, a software application capable of managing classes and sections, providing instructional content to them and facilitating student assessment. The term "Learning Management System" or LMS has become more accepted to designate this type of software, also "Course Management System is often used.

To teach a course online while keeping high standards of learning outcomes demands application of certain instructional design features described in this manual. Let us start by describing a general distance course model, as represented in Figure 1. In essence, distance courses have a more rigorous organization than face-to-face courses, the reason being that the participants and the instructor have fewer opportunities to change course activities by mutual agreement. The course author cannot leave issues "to be solved in class" as in traditional teaching. To the contrary, the course components must be clearly delineated since the beginning to facilitate the teaching and learning processes. A distance course in which the rules are constantly changing causes confusion.

Figure 1 shows that a distance course has an initial section containing **syllabus information.** This section tells the potential participant what the course is about, its goals and objectives, main activities, mandatory or optional resources, and how outcomes will be assessed. The modules are based on a previously established **course map;** namely, a distribution of objectives, content, activities and assessment tasks in several "chunks". Te sequencing of these modules is very important, as it determines the pace of learning; usually each module is assigned a certain number of days. There might be optional modules, but students will need rules about how to select and complete them. As shown in the picture, the **interaction activities** of the modules tend to be variable. An important concern when planning these modules is that the activities are feasible within the total time allotted to the class; for instance fifteen weeks or eight weeks.

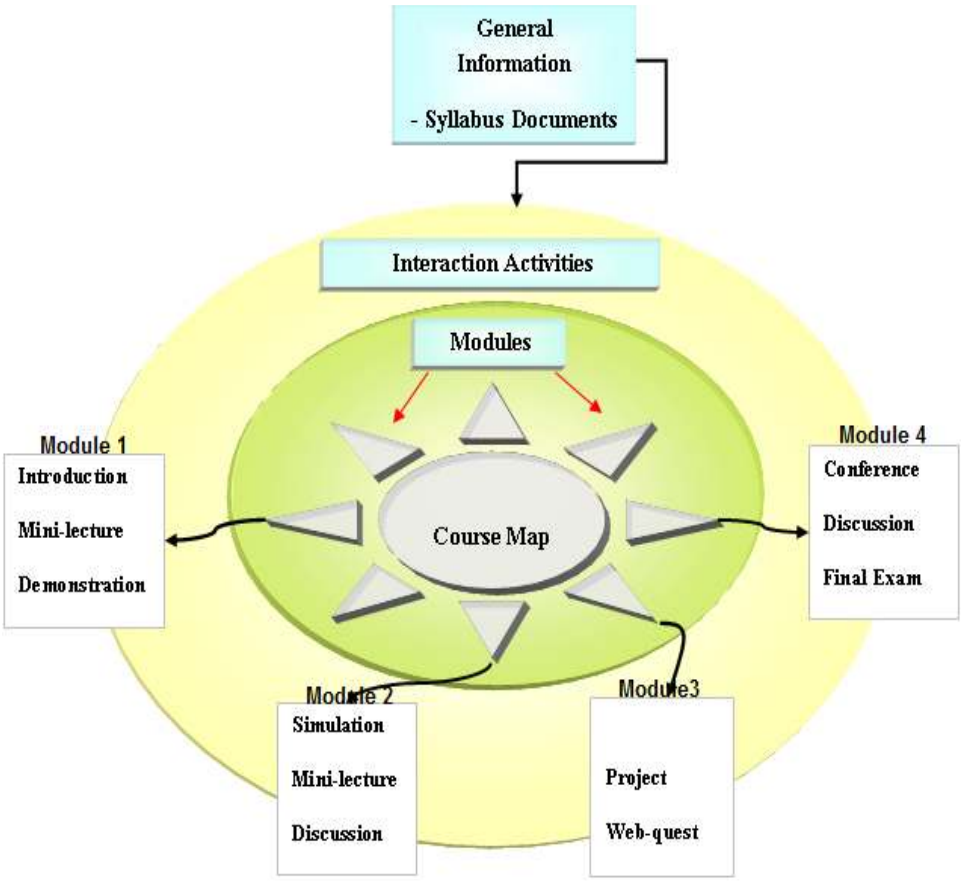

Fig.1. General Model of a Distance Course

Elements that Integrate the Syllabus Information of the Course

Although distance training courses, workshops, seminars, or experiences may vary greatly among each other, the general information components of the syllabus tend to be standardized so the potential participants may be able to compare among courses to choose what they want. Thus, this information is the first thing the participant should see when entering the course. Some common elements of this section are as follows:

- **Course title**
- **General purpose**
- **Learning objectives/goals**
- **Instructor or instructors**
- **Target audience**
- **Duration, credits**
- **Requirements (if any)**
- **Content synopsis**
- **Course expectations**
- **Learning assessment plan**
- **Additional resources**
- **Administrative information: registration, contacts, costs, etc**
- **Weekly schedule of expected activities as per unit or module.**

The instructor has a choice of presenting this information either as a single document attached to the course template or in several web pages ordered in a sequence. The latter facilitates the participant's navigation and also each part can be modified separately. If the choice is a single document, it is better to present it as PDF file than as word-processor file. The reasons have to do with integrity (PDF files are not easily modifiable) and security (PDF files do not carry viruses).

Elements that Integrate the Course Modules

As mentioned above, the course **modules or units** are made up of different interaction activities and evaluations aimed at facilitating the learning process. In other words, the module provides the participant with the information and guidance necessary to carry out determinate learning tasks conducive to achievement of certain objectives. Typical **interaction activities** in a module are reading a chapter or set of articles, observing a video presentation online, holding a group discussion about content questions or cases, answering quizzes and receiving feedback, carrying out an Internet search about a topic and writing a report about it to submit to the instructor. This is just an example of many possible variants. Frequently, the modules include certain icons to show the participant the "to do" sequence of the module. In the example of Figure 2, the module activities are supposed to be carried out by the student from top to bottom although some degree of iteration may be possible. Notice that the icons represent "virtual pages" or "virtual folders" according to the function of each element. Further in this manual, you will find specific **module templates** that will facilitate course developers and instructional designers to compose syllabi and modules of excellent quality.

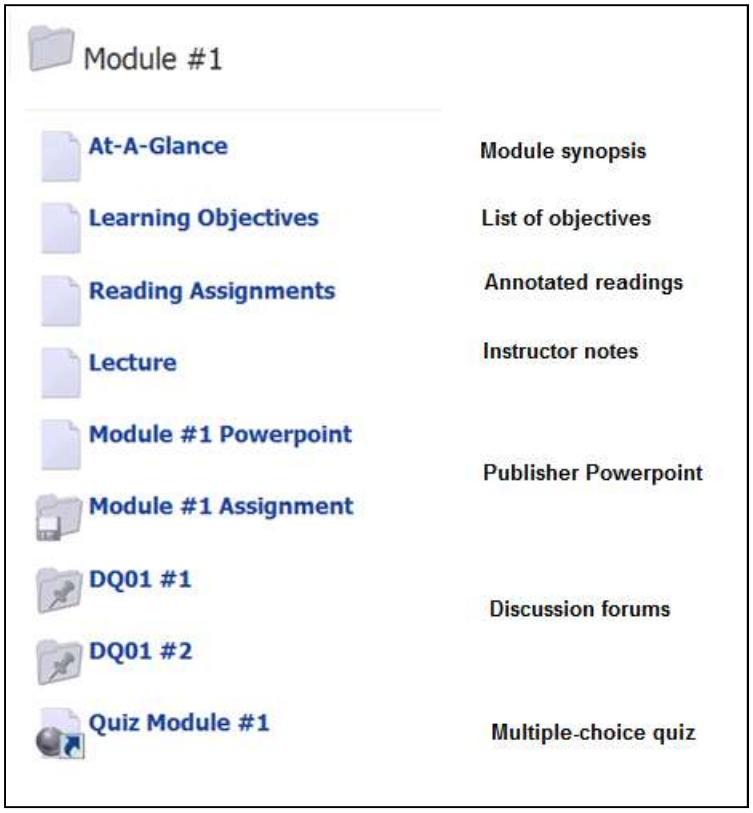

Fig.2. **Example of an Online Learning Module in ANGEL, with legend indicating content**

What is hybrid learning?

A hybrid course is simply one that has some face-to-face and some online components; some institutions define it as the "rule of 50/50", although the proportions may vary. One such course must be planned with the same rigorousness as an online course in order to provide a reliable instruction process to the students. It needs to be clear when the students are expected to meet in a classroom or online and what they will do in each opportunity.

Sometimes hybrid courses are dubbed "the best of both worlds", when they are designed to capitalize the best types of experiences that can be achieved either face-to-face or online; for instance, laboratory work (f2f) and simulations (online), seminar (f2f) and streaming video (online). In the end, the learning objectives are the ones that ultimately determine which components will go in one or the other mode.

Hybrid courses require as detailed planning and design as online courses do precisely because the online and in-presence activities must be perfectly integrated. A good practice is to elaborate a week by week schedule of the course and indicate which activities will be online and which ones in presence. Then, examine the transitions to determine that there is a logic flow from one to another.

What key elements define quality of college-level online and hybrid learning?

This is perhaps the most important question faced by developers of online instruction and, unfortunately, there is not a universally accepted answer to it. Hundreds of research papers, manuals and interactive guides portray different sets of best practices and it is difficult to make a decision as to which ones to follow. On the other hand, the majority of comparative studies between online and face-to-face courses, when similar content is taught, simply indicate non-significant differences; meaning, students learn equally from both forms of instruction. This has been amply documented by Dr. Thomas L. Russell, of North Carolina University, in the website *www.nosignificantdifference.org*. However, recent evidence indicates that some good pedagogical practices, if used consistently, allow online and hybrid courses to have even better performance than face-to-face in indicators such as pass rate, student engagement and student satisfaction; one of the most cited sources in this respect is the study *Evaluation of Evidence-Based Practices in Online Learning: A Meta-Analysis and Review of Online Learning Studies* by Barbara Means and other authors of the US Department of Education -*www2.ed.gov* (September 2010). This study is available in many places of the Web for download without charge; just put the title in a search and you will find it. The conclusions of this study are reinforced by two initiatives that have had high resonance in the University System of Maryland, *The Quality Maters Program* (*www.qmprogram.org*) and the *NCAT Model of Course Redesign (www.thencat.org)*. In the following lines, we will summarize the main quality principles of online learning derived from these sources, which the reader can consult directly by going to the URLs that have been indicated.

Meta-Analysis Principles

In this study, based on systematic review of more than a thousand empirical studies of online learning from 1996 through July 2008, the key findings suggest that students who took all or part of their class online performed better, on average, than those taking the same course through traditional face-to-face instruction when certain conditions were met:

- Instruction combining online and face-to-face elements had a larger advantage relative to purely face-to-face instruction, and even than purely online instruction.
- This difference is not accounted by the media used *per se*, such as text, video, web, or combinations, but may reflect differences in content, pedagogy and learning time in the courses that were compared.
- When learners in the online condition spent more time on task than students in the face-to-face condition, they found a greater benefit from online learning.
- When studies compared blended and purely online learning conditions for similar content they result in similar student learning outcomes.
- Elements such as video or online quizzes do not appear to influence the amount that students learn in online classes.
- Assigning homework and providing feedback to students was usually more effective than frequent online quizzing.
- Techniques implemented in courses that trigger learner activity or learner reflection and self-monitoring of understanding are effective with online learners; this goes in favor of an active learning approach.
- Providing guidance for learning for groups of students appears less successful than using such procedures with individual learners.

Quality Matters Rubric

Quality Matters (QM) is a faculty-centered, peer review process that was designed to certify the quality of online and blended courses. The heart of this initiative is a rubric that addresses 40 specific elements distributed across 8 broad standards. The following is excerpted from the organization's website (www.qmprogram.org/):

1. Course Overview and Introduction
2. Learning Objectives
3. Assessment and Measurement
4. Resources and Materials
5. Learner Engagement
6. Course Technology
7. Learner Support
8. Accessibility

Critical core components (2, 3, 4, 5 and 6) must be bound together to ensure that students achieve the desired learning outcomes. When aligned, each of these course components is directly connected to and in support of the learning objectives.

Standard 1: Course Overview & Introduction

- The overall design of the course is made clear to the student at the beginning of the course.
- Course orientation, *Read Me First* section, or scavenger hunt
- Schedule of activities, including how learning is structured, communication modes, testing procedures, how students submit assignments
- Expectations for student conduct, netiquette, academic honesty
- Instructor profile with contact information (email/phone), teaching philosophy and current photograph
- Student introductions
- Minimum prerequisite knowledge and competencies for the course
- General and course-specific technical skills

Standard 2: Learning Objectives

- Learning objectives are clearly stated and explained.
- The course and individual modules have measurable objectives precisely describe what students gain from instruction.
- Learning objectives are appropriately designed for the level of the course.
- Module objectives are consistent with course-level objectives.
- Learning objectives are written in a way that allows students to easily grasp their meaning and the learning outcomes expected of students. Avoid the use of educational jargon, confusing terms, unnecessarily complex language, and puzzling syntax.
- Module-based or weekly assignment pages with bulleted lists that break down a list of steps to guide the student in meeting learning objectives for each week.
- Clear indicators show that learning objectives are meaningfully assessed.

Standard 3: Assessment & Measurement

- Assessment strategies use established ways to measure effective learning, evaluate student progress by reference to stated learning objectives, and are designed to be integral to the learning process.
- Align course assessments with the course and module objectives
- Explain how the course grades are calculated including relationships, points, percentages and weights.
- Clearly defined policy on late submissions.
- Rubrics for evaluating student papers and assignments.
- Evaluation method for grading student discussion.
- Multiple, sequential assessments are used and are appropriate to the content being measured.
- Multiple opportunities for students to measure their own learning progress.
- Frequent, meaningful and timely feedback.

Standard 4: Resources & Materials

- Instructional materials are sufficiently comprehensive to achieve stated course objectives and learning outcomes and are prepared by qualified persons competent in their fields.
- Course materials and related course resources enable students to achieve stated learning objectives.
- Functions of supplemental resources and links to external websites clearly indicate the purpose of the resource (e.g., background information, personal enrichment, assignment requirement, etc.).
- Provide meaningful content in a variety of sources including textbook, PowerPoint presentations, websites, lecture notes, outlines and multimedia.
- Course materials are current and represent up-to-date thinking and practice in the discipline.
- Materials borrowed from external sources – text, images, graphic materials, tables, videos, audios, websites and other forms of multimedia – are clearly identified in accordance with U.S. Copyright laws.

Standard 5: Learner Engagement

- Meaningful interaction between the instructor and students, among students, and between students and course materials is employed to motivate students and foster intellectual commitment and personal development.
- Learning activities should actively engage the student with course content.
- Activities may include reading assignments, student presentations, science labs, class discussions, case studies, role playing, simulation exercises, practice quizzes, tests, etc.
- Instructor-student interactions may be supportive (welcome and module introductions, weekly announcements, etc.) and instructional (e.g., direct instruction, assignment feedback, FAQs, etc.).
- Communication between instructor and student may be one-to-one (email) or one-to-many (discussion, announcements etc.).
- Clear expectations regarding student participation for required course interactions include frequency, length, timeliness, etc.

Standard 6: Course Technology

- Course navigation and the technology employed in the course foster student engagement and ensure access to instructional materials and resources.

- Technology is not used for technology's sake: tools and media support the learning objectives, and are contextually integrated to encourage students to reflectively grasp and respond to a deeper learning process.
- Types of student engagement include student-content, student-instructor and student-student.
- Navigation throughout the online components of the course is logical, consistent, and efficient.
- Clear instructions for obtaining and installing for required plugins and supplemental software is provided.
- Instructional materials, resources, tools and media are easily accessible, obtainable and usable by the student. For textbooks, CDs and DVDs, the title, author, publisher, ISBN, copyright date and purchase locations must be provided.
- Use of innovative technologies must be effective and efficient. Common file types (e.g., PDF) and compressed formats (e.g., MP4) ensure that a wider range of students have access to course content.

Standard 7: Learner Support

- The course facilitates student access to institutional services essential to student success.
- Provide a clear description of available technical support services, including the phone number to the help desk, the email link to the help desk, and a link to the support website.
- Provide clear directions for obtaining support for access to publisher resources or supplemental websites.
- Link to tutorials or other resources with instructors on how to use the various tools in the learning management system.
- Create a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document.
- Link to institutional academic support resources such as Academic Advising, ADA services, Testing Services, etc. Include contact information, location and hours of operation.
- Link to library including information on how to obtain library access, request materials, search databases and contact a librarian.
- Describe student support services including registration, financial aid, student life, counseling and career services. Include contact information, location and hours of operation.

Standard 8: Accessibility

- The face-to-face and online course components are accessible to all students.
- Web-based components comply with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1972 and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).
- Include a link to the institutional ADA policy and/or guidelines.
- Inform students how to gain access to disability support services.
- Provide equivalent text representation for audio, video, image and animation such as text transcripts or closed captioning.
- Utilize HTML elements such as ALT tags for images, LABEL tags for forms and SUMMARY/header tags for tables to describe content for students who rely on screen readers.
- All course links are descriptive. For example, a link to a quiz should say "Take Quiz 1" instead of "click here."
- Use appropriate font, color and spacing to ensure readability and minimize distractions.

NCAT Course Redesign Principles

The National Center for Academic Transformation (NCAT) is a non-profit group coordinated by Dr. Carol A. Twigg (formerly from SUNY Empire State College), which has been adviser to many Higher Education state systems and independent colleges and universities. Their philosophy for online and

hybrid learning is condensed in five principles that have been demonstrated effective with hundreds of courses.

Principle #1: Redesign the whole course

Rather than focusing a single section of a course, NCAT advocates that to achieve effectiveness and economies of scale all sections of large enrollment courses must be designed under one similar model. They exemplify five highly effective models: Supplemental (add online resources to supplement in-presence instruction), Replacement (replace some in-presence activities with online), Emporium (a workshop and problem-solving center as opposite to regular classes), Fully Online, Buffet (all options available), and Linked Workshops. By focusing in a single model, faculty increase their collaboration and synergy then increasing effectiveness.

Principle #2: Encourage active learning

Learning by doing is privileged over learning by reading or listening. Active learning may include tactics such as "tutorials, exercises and low-stakes quizzes that provide frequent practice, feedback and reinforcement of course concepts". A variety of technology resources are used to provide those.

Principle #3: Provide students with individualized assistance

Most of the time, the application of this principle requires changes in the roles responsible of instruction purview. Instead of having only instructors in fixed class periods, the redesigned courses may use graduate teaching assistants, laboratory coordinators or peer tutors. Often times, the roles of instructors are mutated also into mentors, individual or group tutors.

Principle #4: Build in ongoing assessment and prompt (automatic) feedback

The principle of feedback is capitalized through every resource available, such as text banks, learning management system and computer-based assessment strategies. The idea is that every desirable outcome is graded and prompt feedback provided to student, thus leading to more student engagement and better outcomes.

Principle #5: Ensure time on task and monitor student progress

This key principle of Mastery Learning is promoted by using a modular format and requiring completion of each module before starting the next. Through feedback and guidance, instructors procure that all students reach the desired objectives within the time originally destined to instruction because a completely self-paced course usually involves greater costs.

The three frameworks that have been presented here have more points in common than divergences; therefore they can be used together as guidelines for practice in order to assure high quality of online and hybrid instruction. In this manual, we use *Quality Matters Rubric* as the leading model as this one addresses the course components in more detail. The other two are used as complement, drawing from them orientations for specific course components. In Appendix 3, we compare *Quality Matters* with *NCAT Course Redesign* to determine which elements are common and which different.

What about *Mobile Learning*? This has been dubbed the fifth generation of distance learning, as the previous four have been Correspondence Education, Educational Radio and TV, Multimedia Education and Online Learning. The major distinction of "mobile" from "online" is the use of small portable devices of communication, such as smart phones or pad computers for interacting with instructional content and with peers and instructors. As of the second decade of the XXI Century, it is not clear whether these devices entirely will replace desktop computers and notebooks or rather will integrate with them. Mobile devices are widespread in the population but also limited when one tries to

do complex tasks with them. Anyhow, mobile courses are already present and they have some distinctive features, such as frequent use of podcasts and webcasts, capture of information from the student environment (using camera and microphone features), real-time collaboration and incorporation in courses of supplemental applications available for the devices (e.g. clicker, calculator, translator, etc.). The principles of instructional quality discussed in this manual apply equally to mobile learning.

Roles in the development process

A high quality online or hybrid learning program can hardly be elaborated only by one person, since it is a complex product. Its elaboration requires the presence of at least two types of specialties: the expert in the subject matter or **content expert** and the **instructional or pedagogical designer** (which usually has substantial knowledge about instructional media). If there are special requirements, such as video or software elaboration, other media specialists may integrate also the team. Each professional contributes to with the process according to his/her own specialty. The content expert selects or writes the course's basic information; the instructional or pedagogical designer adapts the contents to the distance learning methodology. A few courses may need an **instructional resource producer,** when certain special resources such as video, software or computer art need to be developed for the course. This specialist is usually a contract for a short period. At Bowie State University, the content experts are faculty members or adjuncts, while the instructional designers form part of the personnel of Academic Computing, Division of Academic Affairs.

The following table defines the usual activities of the two main roles involved in the course development process:

Table 1: Roles in Online/Hybrid Development Process

Content Specialist	Instructional Designer
Defines structure of course syllabus according to BSU Faculty Handbook model	Adapts syllabus to online or hybrid instruction, in agreement with content specialist
Selects or elaborates content guides for the course, applying quality criteria derived from the subject matter	Suggests pedagogical approaches , techniques or resources to facilitate learning, based on the realm of instructional technology
Selects or elaborate learning assessment activities	Adapts learning assessment activities for use in the online environment
Reviews consistency of the developed course in terms of quality of content and skills	Reviews consistency of the developed course with respect to best pedagogical practices; example: Quality Matters Rubric
Makes any adjustments to improve learning outcomes and/or avoid students' problems of understanding	Makes adjustments to improve navigation in the course and utilization of instructional resources both by instructor and students
Specifies content and format of learning assessment activities and the type of feedback to provide to the students	Determines how to install the assessment instruments and feedback forms online, to facilitate the students' interaction with them
Defines general configuration of the course grade book	Assures correct functionality of the course grade book

Outline of the course development process

Educational publishers offer these days numerous development and adaptation manuals for distance courses, some with a few basic functions and others that are very detailed and hard to manage. Popular books are, for instance *Building Online Learning Communities*, by Palloff and Pratt (Jossey Bass, 2007); *The Systematic Design of Instruction*, by Dick, Carey and Carey (Pearson, 2009); *Teaching Online: A Practical Guide* by Ko and Rossen (Routledge, 2010); and *Essentials of Online Course Design: A Standards-Based Guide* by Vai and Sosulski (Routledge 2011). The present manual is by no means a replacement of these sources or similar. They involve more detailed treatment of design principles, theory background, many illustrations end examples, and copious self-check guides. Instead, this manual suggests a set of abbreviated procedures for faculty and staff of BSU, which can be used within the limitations of time and resources for developing online instruction in this institution. Thus, it intends to outline the general process and provide some operational detail when necessary. If somebody wants a wider range of examples or to have principles discussed in more detail, then the manual can be used together with one of the suggested books. The proposed model of course creation includes four interrelated processes: *planning, development, evaluation* and *delivery*; these, in turn, are subdivided into sub-stages. Table 2 presents the complete model in a linear fashion, although in reality the activities may vary in order and iterations between them are frequent. Nevertheless, the design team can use this sequence as a general plan to develop the course and establish a timetable. Each step will require reviewing other elements moving backwards or forward into the sequence. This approach is needed, because all the steps are interrelated and changes in one of the steps may require changes in the others.

Table 2. BSU Online Course Development Model

Process	Steps
I- Planning	1. Determining the development team 2. Designing the course syllabus
II. Development	3. Defining the module interaction strategies 4. Selecting and/or elaborating multimedia resources 5. Creating the instruments or assignments to evaluate the learning process 6. Checking the course's final interactive model in the delivery platform
III. Delivery	7. Transferring the course to the production environment 8. Instructor and tutor training 9. Regular course delivery accompanied by counseling and evaluation
IV. Evaluation	10. Survey faculty and students using the online or hybrid course 11. Make adjustments based on survey and qualitative observations

In the next paragraphs, we provide a narrative description of the model aobve aimed at guiding the course developers. The user will see that certain steps are very complex – requiring several days, while others can be accomplished within a single day. Further sections of this manual will contain additional orientations for the more complex steps.

The development process starts with the definition of a team of content specialist(s) and instructional designer that will be in charge of the course. The first major task of the team is to revise or define the course syllabus according to the Faculty Handbook; the process allows generating a syllabus, usually 8 to 12 page document, defining the course prerequisites, goals and objectives, required resources for the student, outline of content per module, teaching and assessment strategies and special considerations for implementation. One major component of the syllabus is the module structure, which depends of the number of credit units assigned to the course; in general, there are two or three modules per credit unit. Another way of seeing it is one module as equivalent to two or three weeks of activity; usually, there are 5 to 8 modules in a course. The content specialist and the instructional designer review and approve the final version of the syllabus before starting developing the modules. Another key component of the syllabus is a detailed week-by-week schedule that indicates the distribution of course content and the expected activities of the student, such as readings, discussions, teamwork and submission of assignments.

After a well-structured syllabus is achieved, the process of module development takes four to twelve weeks, depending of the initial status of the course. It involves three parallel lines of activity: defining the interaction strategies of the student and writing content guides to facilitate this interaction, selecting or producing multimedia resources for the purpose of learning, and selecting or creating assessment activities that will allow the students demonstrate their learning. In the next sections, there are suggestions about how to carry out this process most efficiently. At the end of module development, there will be a first draft of the interactive course and the content specialist and instructional designer thoroughly will review it. The most important criteria to accomplish are coherence between and within the modules, clarity of orientations for the student and good matching of assessment activities with the desired objectives. The *Quality Matters*[1] rubric must be used in this stage to evaluate the product; a summary of it is at the beginning of this manual.

The delivery stage begins when the course is transferred to the production environment; in other words, it is now visible to the intended users. Usually, some previous training of the tutors or instructors in charge must be included at this point. They need to know the developers' expectations and have some guidelines for interacting with students. After that, the course is delivered and the student assessment activities take place. By the end of the course, students and instructors will receive a link to an end-of-term evaluation survey (see appendix) which provides information to the academic department and to Academic Computing for improving future versions. The inclusion of changes in the course template will be the end of the course development cycle, which can be re-initiated when the academic department determines that there is a need for a major revision of the course.

Guidelines for writing the course syllabus

1) Start with a course outline

A good practice of course development consists of having a "blueprint" of the whole course before initiating work with the modules. It consists of elaborating a table for each module with the following elements:

- **Objectives:** Expected course outcomes, written from the perspective of the student, preferably in terms of observable behavior. The latter facilitates that objectives are measurable; for instance, it is

[1] The Quality Matters Rubric is copyrighted material; nevertheless, an useable copy of it can be found in the organization's website http://www.qmprogram.org/rubric . In this Manual, we have used as reference the 2008-2010 edition.

difficult to measure that says “Comprehend use of passive voice in English” is difficult to evaluate, while one that says “Identify valid reasons for using the passive voice in English in various sentences” is easier to measure. Another important requisite of objectives is that they correspond to the curriculum level of the course; in practice, this means that different categories of courses have objectives that vary in order of complexity and/or specialization; thus, objectives of developmental courses are less complex than those of general education courses, which in turn are less specialized than those of the career programs, and so forth. [QM 2]

- **Content:** List of topics or skills that the participant should know in order to attain the objective. The content in online or hybrid courses is usually disaggregated or broken-down in modules or units associated with major objectives of the course. There is usually one list of high-order objectives for the course and sub-lists of specific objectives for the modules or units [QM 2.2]
- **Resources:** materials that are available or new materials to be prepared, to facilitate the student attainment of the established objectives. The selection of materials that correspond to the objectives is one of the most important tasks of the content specialist, and it must be a thorough process. Materials can be readings, presentations, interactive learning objects, recorded videos and many other elements; each one and all of them introduced in the course because of their relevance with the corresponding objectives. In addition, all materials not authored by the content specialist must be appropriately cited using a reference style such as APA or MLA [QM 4]. An overarching principle fort the content specialist is that every resource introduced in the course signifies a certain interval of time for the student to grasp the content or do what is expected with it; therefore, the instructional materials should not be so overwhelming that the student has no sufficient time to go over all of them but also not so abbreviated that there is considerable slack time in the course. It must be procured an optimum of student engagement by keeping a match between expected hours of work (as determined by the credit units of the course) and the amount of materials included for study. [QM 4.2, CR 5]
- **Interaction:** It refers to actions performed by the participant to progress in their learning. These include activities such as readings, virtual classroom discussions, self-evaluations, Internet searches, interacting with simulations, and communicating in teams with other participants and the instructor. Interaction involves also all student learning assessment activities, such as graded discussion forums, quizzes and tests, written assignments, projects, etc. All interaction and assessment activities must be aligned with the objectives. [QM5.1,QM5.2,CR2]

Below, there is an example of a module outline that can be used as reference:

Table 1. Example of a Lesson or Module Organizational Outline

Objectives	Content	Resources	Interaction/ Assessment
Define the revenue and expenses of the Municipal Budget	▪ Budget assumptions ▪ Accounting system ▪ Revenue accounts ▪ Expense accounts	Read Chapter 15. Cases: Examples of budget of county and state organizations.	Graded exercise: read examples on screen and then complete the spreadsheet with revenue and expense accounts.

2) Select appropriate interaction activities

As observed in Fig. 1, each module is integrated by different learning activities through which interaction occurs in multiple ways: student to content, student to student, and student to instructor. These activities are the essence of the course, since it is through them that the students attain the desired objectives. It is impossible to describe all types of activities that can be included in a course. Nevertheless, the following tables summarize some of the most frequently used; they are grouped into individual, collaborative or inquiry-based, depending of the predominant form of interaction. The next pages present tables with succinct descriptions of learning activities more often used in online courses; these are not the only ones that exist and each instructor can innovate them, either by finding new ones or combining the ones described here. Use the tables as a basic reference.

Table 2. Learning Activity Classification [QM5.1, QM5.2, QM 6.2, CR2]

Individual Learning Activities The participant acquires the desired knowledge, attitude or skills through one-on-one interaction with the instructional resource and the content, either by him/herself or with the tutor's intervention. They are useful for learning content with a clearly established structure and not subject to varied interpretations, such as mathematics, accounting, information systems, and administrative procedures.	
Types	***Examples***
- *Presentation*	An explanation of tax systems, in a printed text or recorded video
- *Tutorials*	An interactive lesson on-line to learn how to solve linear equations
- *Exercise or problem*	Given a method to calculate real property tax, determine the annual municipal tax
- *Simulation*	A program like *SimCity*, which allows a simulated construction of a city and its services
- *Story or narration*	Anecdotes about cases of conflicts between the mass media and federal policies

Collaborative Learning Activities

The participant acquires the knowledge, attitude, or skills desired by interacting with the instructor, colleagues, or experts in multiple ways. Largely, the results depend on the group's degree of participation. They are useful to learn about social and political topics, ethics, communication skills, change of attitudes, and management competencies.

Types	***Examples***
- Discussion or forum	A complex topic is proposed and all the participants must express their opinions and discuss them.
- Case study	A problematic situation similar to the one at the workplace is presented, including several roles or positions. The participants must come up with "solutions" through discussion.
- Project	Present a plan to improve preservation of natural resources in a forest area.
- Workshop	The participant team has a specific task; for example, to prepare a municipal budget.
- Problem-based learning	The participants analyze a complex problem, such as substance use by teenagers, from different points of view.

Heuristic Learning Activities

There is no predefined content. Participants must seek on their own way to learn, based on very general guidelines provided in the course. Each participant will obtain something different. They are useful for learning research skills, exploring problems or controversial issues that are ill defined, and learning political management competencies.

Types	***Examples***
- Field observation	In a topic about global warming, students will ask the elders in their communities what changes in environment they have observed through 50 years.
- On-line research	Make an extensive search of Web resources about the topic of global warming.
- Role playing	Simulate the process of a public employee strike and negotiation, adopting different roles.
- Portfolio	The participant prepares a portfolio with appropriate collection of artwork produced during a fine arts course.
- Brainstorming	Engage in open discussion and suggestions about a topic. For example, how to improve quality of diet to prevent obesity. Everyone contributes with ideas and the facilitator tries to achieve consensus.

SYLLABUS TEMPLATE

To facilitate the process of elaboration of a syllabus, the following template contains the most important sections that must be filled-in by the content specialist with support of the instructional designer.

Elements that should precede the Syllabus

In a face-to-face course, the instructor normally has an introductory session to the class where certain conventions and instructor's expectations about it are explained. I an online course, this introductory session may or may not happen. Therefore, it is convenient to have in written form the conventions and expectations that apply to most online courses. To this end, Academic Computing has written sample materials that are included in the default course templates. The instructor can review them and make any changes as appropriate. These sample texts contain the following:

- **How to start and navigate an online course** [QM1.1]
- **How online and hybrid courses are different from in-presence courses** [QM1.2]
- **Basic netiquette principles** [QM1.3]
- **Minimum student technical skills for taking online courses** [QM1.7]
- **How to access technologies that may be used in the course** [QM6.6]

At the end of these documents, the developer may include a multiple-choice survey to assure that the student has reviewed each one of the parts. Optionally, this survey can be set automatically to open the other course components (ANGEL feature known as "Automate").

SYLLABUS COMPONENTS

The following syllabus components are adapted from BSU Faculty Handbook Appendix 9 [QM1]

Course Number and Title:

Instructor/Developer(s):

Name, title
Department
Office
Phone
Email Address
Office Hours

Special Instructor's and Students' Introduction for Online Courses

One obvious aspect in which online courses differ from their face-to-face counterparts is the amount of contact between instructor and the students. To avoid that this is perceived as an anonymity situation, the instructor must include detailed paragraphs about elements that normally form part of the introduction to the students, e.g. academic degrees, professional experiences, competence in the subject matter and any personal information that may help to connect with the

students. Quite often, the instructor includes a picture or short video to allow visual identification by the students. For similar reasons, the instructor encourages the students to introduce themselves at the beginning of the course, which can be accomplished through the Roster section in ANGEL or through a special discussion forum. It is for the instructor to decide if these introductions occur in the syllabus area or as a separate activity; sort of ice-breaker at the beginning of the course. [QM1.4, QM1.5]

General Course Description (copy from catalog):

Prerequisites:

Number of weeks: Credit Hours: Lecture Hours: Laboratory Hours:

Term to be offered:

1. **Required Text(s)/Readings/Materials** (list full references with ISBN when applicable):

Required Materials besides Text (CD, DVD, Websites, experiment kits, etc.):

Other Reference Materials, Recommended but Not Required:

Conceptual Framework

This section contains a brief rationale of the course that may contain elements such as overview of the subject matter about, justification of the course and role in the curriculum. As courses with similar title abound in university and college curricula, it is convenient also to explain to students what is distinctive of this course. This section tends to vary from professor to professor. [QM1]

2. **Course Objectives** [QM2]

The list of objectives must be numbered, so it is easy to reference them in the context of the course. They must be comprehensive in the sense that, considered together, these objectives represent skill or capabilities expected from the students by the end of the course.

In addition, there are four important Quality Matters rules when writing objectives:

(1) Objectives must be written from student perspective –e.g. "Describe issues, challenges and opportunities in using computers to enable people with physical and mental disabilities," instead of "Introduce the topic of using computers to enable people with physical and mental disabilities". [QM2.3]

(2) Objectives must represent measurable outcomes, not simple attempts of doing something. For instance, in the previous objective the term "describe" is essential because it indicates potential assessment activities to measure the objective; a short essay written by the student, a class presentation, a short answer test, etc. It would not be measurable if the text said "Become familiar with the issues, challenges and opportunities in using computers to enable people with physical and mental disabilities." How could we measure "familiarity"? [QM2.1]

(3) A list of course objectives must correspond to the top outcomes desired in the course and be succinct enough to avoid over-burdening the student. Eight to sixteen objectives is a good measure. Further in the structure of the online course, the developer will write the module or unit objectives that are derived from the course objectives; these other objectives define more specific outcomes and point to assessment activities. [QM2.2]

(4) Objectives must be consistent with the course level, which has to do with the complexity of the tasks or the level of abstraction required from the student to meet each objective. The developer must pay attention to whether the course is developmental level, 100 to 200 level, 300 to 400 level, or a graduate course. A useful way of determining the appropriate level of a course is to look at the objectives of courses considered prerequisites of it. If there are not any prerequisites, the reference is the baggage that students bring from High School. [QM 2.5]

Writing good quality objectives for a course is not easy task. Therefore, it is convenient for the course developer to consult the Instructor's Manual for the textbook, if available; if not, there are in the Web hundreds of samples of objectives in every discipline. Also, time-honored guidelines for writing objectives such as Benjamin Bloom, Gagné and Briggs, or Robert Mager may be useful in the wording of objectives. All these guides are easy to find in the Web by using the author's name followed by "objectives"; a search will lead to numerous articles and self-help pages.

Instructional Strategies

List and briefly describe the strategies that you will use in this class, e.g. recorded lectures, discussions, simulation exercises, small group activities, guided laboratory activities, etc. State in general terms how these activities relate to meeting the course objectives. [QM5, QM5.1, CR2]

Course Requirements

First, indicate what is expected that students bring to the class in terms of materials, tools such as calculator, workbook, headset (for computer conferencing), etc. It is convenient to include also some internal norms of the class, such as how many hours of study expected, timeliness of homework, collaborative activities, and what to do if the student gets behind in the modules. Finally, briefly describe the minimum preparedness that is expected from the students to take this class; for instance, if some mathematical skills are required, what level of writing skills is expected, if students need to do presentations in oral debates, etc. [QM1.6]

Evaluation

Prior to writing this section, the developer needs to have a complete assessment plan of the course although she/he is not going to include it in full version within the syllabus. To design such plan, the developer would review the course objectives; group them in corresponding learning assessment activities such as quizzes, graded discussions, research paper projects, essays, etc. It is pedagogically advisable to have a various types of evaluation activities rather than a uniform mode of evaluation through the whole course such as quizzes. Two important reasons determine this prescription; on one hand, the expected outcomes of a course usually require the students to execute certain tasks that build upon each other in order of complexity – e.g. answer questions to review readings, solve a series of short problems, and then write a project. On the other hand, college-level courses demand simultaneously from students various academic skills such as interpreting readings, writing proficiently, analyzing and discussing cases, solving problems, being able to do field observations, developing applied projects, etc..; it follows that the assessment activities must reflect such diversity of skills instead of being uniform.

Another important distinction is made between *formative evaluation activities* and *summative evaluation activities*. The former are designed for the specific purpose of providing automatic or instructor-based feedback to students about their progress in the course. The *summative* instead encompass the whole course or major sections of it, e.g. midterm exam, final exam, course project, research report, etc. Formative assessment activities are usually placed in the course modules, for

instance through discussions and quizzes; while summative activities are placed in separate sections of the course. Overall, the developer needs to assure a high degree of correspondence among course and module objectives; module activities and resources supporting these activities; assessment activities and course or module objectives. A practical way of achieving these correspondences is using the following checking sequence: (1) compare side-to-side each module objectives and the general course objectives; (2) check the module activities and resources against the module objectives to determine if they are adequately covered; (3) next to each module objective indicate in parentheses the corresponding assessment activities, it may be one or more. Make changes in assessment activities when you find that an objective is not evaluated properly. [QM3.1, CR4]

An appropriate way of describing evaluations in the syllabus is grouping them by type; for instance Quizzes, Tests, Discussion Participation, Case Studies, Short Essays, Research Paper, etc. Each type requires a short description and identification of key criteria used for grading. For instance, for quizzes you may say "Students need 80% answers right to pass a quiz". Discussions may have criteria such as "Discussions are evaluated on the basis of frequency of answers, accuracy of content, use of reading sources, and correctness of style." It is frequent that discussions and long assignments such as case studies or research papers are evaluated through a detailed *rubric*; a scoring tool containing a list of criteria with descriptions of values attached to these criteria such as *excellent, good, minimum acceptable* or *poor*. The instructor uses this uniform rubric to grade instead of subjectively assigning points to each student; therefore, the student has immediately an explanation of the grade. The more advanced learning management systems usually have tools for managing rubrics with minimum effort by the instructor. [QM3.1, QM3.3, QM3.5, CR4]

The evaluation information provided to students in the course syllabus usually has the following sub-sections:

Grading Policy [QM3.2]

Breakdown of Grade

Activity	**Grade %**

Grading Scale: Undergraduate

90 - 100: A
80 - 89: B
70 - 79: C
60 - 69: D
0 - 59: F

Graduate

90 – 100 A
80 – 89 B
70 – 79 C
0 – 69 F

Grading Rubrics

If rubrics are going to be used, this is a good place for including the rubrics according to type of activity, such as discussions and papers.

Example of a rubric for discussion forums:

Discussion Rubric:

Participation is measured by quantity and quality of posting in discussion forums. A minimum of three postings is required: one new thread and two reflective responses to *different* members. You will be graded in a 0 to 100 scale as follows:

A-level postings (90-100 points):

- Quantity criterion (3 posting) is met or exceeded
- New thread is at least half-page (200 words) and sources are cited (it may be Internet sources)
- Answers are timely within the specified duration of the module
- Answers respond adequately to the content or question asked in the forum
- Make connections to the course content and/or other experiences
- Are written correctly in English, observing paragraph construction and punctuation rules.

B-level postings (80- 89 points):

- Quantity criterion (3 posting) is met
- New thread is shorter than half-page (200 words) and sources are cited (it may be Internet sources)
- Answers are timely within the specified duration of the module
- Answers respond to the content or question asked in the forum but some detail is missing
- Connections to the course content and/or other experiences are not well elaborated
- Answers are mostly in correct English, but there are some flaws in paragraph construction or punctuation.

C-level postings (70-79 points):

- Quantity is 2 posting at least
- New thread is shorter than half-page (200 words) and sources not cited
- Answers are usually, but not always, made in a timely fashion
- Answers are generally accurate, but the information delivered is limited
- Make vague or incomplete connections between class content and posting by other students
- Answers are mostly in correct English, but there are some flaws in paragraph construction or punctuation.

D-level postings (60-69):

- Participated only once
- New thread is missing or much shorter than half-page (200 words) and sources not cited
- Response was not timely
- Answer was superficial, repetitive of question enunciation or what others said
- No effort was made to connect answer with course content
- Answer has more than two flaws concerning spelling, grammar, paragraph construction or punctuation.

F Discussion (0 points).

- No participation in discussion forum, or
- Participant was rude to other participants, or
- Response was copied from other participant or somewhere else, or
- Participant failed to meet the basic criteria for the “D-level”.

3. Class Schedule

This is a detailed account of the activities of the course that serves as reference for administration.

(Calculate 1-3 weeks per module; add or delete rows accordingly)

Module #, Title, Weeks	**Dates**	**Content (chapters, readings)**	**Interaction and Assessment (*)**
Module 01 Title Weeks 1 -	From / / / to / / /		
Module 02 Title Weeks 1 –	From / / / to / / /		
Module 03 Title Weeks 1 -	From / / / to / / /		
Module 04 Title Weeks 1 -	From / / / to / / /		
Module 05 Title Weeks 1 -	From / / / to / / /		
Module 06 Title Weeks 1 -	From / / / to / / /		
Module 07 Title Weeks 1 -	From / / / to / / /		
Module 08 Title Weeks 1 -	From / / / to / / /		

(*) ***Typical activities:*** send email, submit presentation, attend remote lecture, participate in discussion, submit case study, work in team project, submit quiz, submit homework, submit essay, submit research paper and report field observation.

END OF TEMPLATE

Guidelines for writing the course modules

1) Write clear, achievable and measurable learning objectives

Learning objectives should include a lead-in statement such as "Upon successful completion of this module, students will be able to..." Module objectives must include actions verbs, performance criteria, and conditions expressing what the student will be able to do after taking the course.

When developing learning objectives, list verbs that demonstrate a measurable outcome. Place the verb at the beginning of the objective. Some examples are: define, repeat, list, record, recall, relate, underline, translate, discuss, describe, identify, locate, report, interpret, dramatize, illustrate, schedule, sketch, apply, operate, evaluate, solve, calculate, etc. Explain briefly "how" the knowledge will be shown: e.g., "Define, in writing, the influence of the Bauhaus movement on the design of contemporary buildings;" or "Give a graphical representation of what it means for a function to have a limit at a point." As indicated above, there are many guides in the Web about writing objectives according to prescriptions of Benjamin Bloom, Gagné and Briggs and Robert Mager; just type in a Google search one of these names followed by "objectives". Use your own criterion to determine to what extent your objectives will follow one or other model; the most important is that they are clear to student and measurable through assessment activities. [QM2.1, QM2.2, QM2.3 and QM2.5].

At the module level, it is convenient not only to write the list of objectives but also explain how the materials and activities included in the module will help the student achieve these objectives. This can be done by means of a table of two columns Objective/Activity or short sentences at the end of the list that will tell the student, for instance "For objectives 1 to 4, you will read Chapter 5; then you will answer questions in the discussion forum of the module." [QM2.4]

2) Provide activity guides to engage the student

The content activities form the heart of the module; a module may involve 3 to 7 activity guides, depending of the time of engagement assigned to it. All these activities are derived from the learning objectives. Imagine them as short tutorials for the student during each session of individual work (1 to 3 ½ hours) or each chapter of the textbook(s) they need to read, or a phase of a project. Other names used to describe the activity guides are "content guides", "instructor notes" or "guidelines".

The guides should:

- Summarize key topics of module, providing context and organization to course content appropriate to the level of the student;
- State clearly the type of interaction expected of the student with the materials, with the team or with the instructor, using sentences such as "Read xxx", "Participate in discussion of xxx", "Submit exercise xxx", etc.;
- Clarify aspects that are missing or not sufficiently exposed in the readings;
- Point at connections with other topics;
- Explain procedures;
- Provide an interactive exercises for the entire class or for teams;
- Indicate whether the instructor will be or not available to answer questions about them and provide help;

They should not:

- Repeat what the textbook(s) already have;
- Contain long lists of URL links that discourage exploration;

- Contain material that is not essential to achieve the objectives.

In short activity guides allow you as instructor to maintain a teaching presence as if you were in contact with the class for the duration of the module -you are actually accompanying students but at-a-distance. It is important that the student perceives these guides as support from the instructor.
[QM5.1, QM5.2, QM5.3, QM5.4, CR2, CR5]

3) Combine assessment with activity guides

Many research studies have determined that students do much better with frequent small assignments than with fewer, larger ones. Reason for that is that small assignments:

- can be tailored more easily to suit the short attention span of some students;
- allow students to log on and off within short 30 to 45-minute segments;
- are frequent enough to discourage plagiarism and to keep students on task;
- are so frequent that students can rarely find a friend or partner who will agree to "take" the class for them, a common worry for online instructors;
- are easier for the instructor to grade many of them automatically or with help of a rubric;
- promote that ever-so-important goal of greater interactivity with your students; and
- promote higher levels of cognitive learning, when used consistently in a course.

Longer assignments can be programmed through partial deliveries, e.g. a research proposal will have stages of problem statement, literature review, method, and final proposal. [QM3.4, QM3.5]

4) Use diverse materials aligned with objectives

The following list indicates resources that can be used in any module. It is convenient to use each resource in the most universal formats that can be accepted by any Web browser. These formats are indicated below. [QM4.1, QM4.2, QM4.3, QM4.4, QM6.1, QM6.2, QM6.5, CR2, and CR5]

Documents*:*

Any attachments for content guides should be in PDF or RTF (Rich Text Format) to ensure cross-platform compatibility for student users. A popular free converter of Word and PowerPoint to PDF is PRIMO PDF, which can be found in the Web.

Power Point*:*

You must include detailed lecture notes in the NOTES section beneath each slide. When saving your presentation for your course, please SAVE AS in the single web page format for the most effective web delivery. As PowerPoint may face also compatibility issues and slow download rate, it is better to save presentations as PDF handouts, two slides per page, which creates smaller files. PowerPoint presentations can be also converted with PRIMO PDF.

Video Animation or Video From Real*:*

Video files should be compressed and uploaded in a common streaming format such as MPEG/MPG, MOV or WMV. Flash (FLV) is also extensively used but it has problems with Apple computers and some types of mobile devices. Do not use AVI, native to Windows, because it is uncompressed. Alternatively, use YouTube to convert the multimedia and link to the content from your course site. Thousands of videos can be used from external sources without need of

copying them; for this, search in Google Video, YouTube, MITWorld or other source. ANGEL has the "G" option in the HTML editor that allows directly inserting Google Video/YouTube videos.

Audio*:*

Audio files should be compressed and uploaded as MP3, the most common format. Alternatively, RA and WMA are also acceptable, but do not use WAV as it is uncompressed.

Images*:*

Image should be sized for appropriate presentation on the student user's web browser. Ideally, your image should be a JPG, GIF or PNG – do NOT use BMP! Ideally, your image should not be larger than 450 pixels across or approximately 200 kb in size. If an image must be larger, you must use a thumbnail of the image with a link to the original, larger file. Do not size images by dragging the borders with the cursor, because this does not change their byte size; change image properties instead. Image sizes, in the current status of the Internet as of 2012 should not exceed 5 x 5 inches. There are exceptions, if you need to show extreme detail in an image.

Data Files:

Data files that students will use for problem solving must be uploaded in universal formats, understandable by any software. The most common are CSV, standing for comma-separated values and TAB or TSV, standing for tab-separated values. Both are simple text files recognizable by almost any data-manipulation software. An exception to this is if you are teaching a course about a determinate software application – e.g. SPSS, Excel, Mathematica, etc.. Then, the data will be uploaded in a file native to the corresponding application.

Interactive Learning Objects:

Today, it is possible to add software applications that enhance student learning by engaging the student in interaction with simulations, games, databases, exploration resources and many others that receive the generic name of "learning objects". The most well-known peer-reviewed source of such objects is www.merlot.org . Basically, the use of a learning object involves linking to the page where the object is displayed or to a menu page that introduces several learning objects. The course author must provide instructions about what is expected that students will do during the interaction and if there is some assignment associated to it. It is necessary that the instructor gets well familiarized with each learning object that she or he is going to use in the course, in order to write specific instructions for students.

Synchronous Communication Sessions (*Bb Collaborate*)

For diverse reasons, an instructor may need direct contact with students during an interactive session, using voice, text and graphic elements as in a lecture supported with technology. The technological solution fitting this need is a synchronous virtual class environment incorporated within the LMS. At BSU, such environment is provided through *Blackboard Collaborate* that is accessible in the Communications Tab of ANGEL. The instructor can plan a synchronous session using a calendar interface to indicate title, date and time. The session can be made recurrent during a certain period, such as a term. To start the session, the instructor clicks on a special link created for it and it will activate the Collaborate program. Instructors and students will share a screen canvas were different elements can be loaded: PowerPoint presentations, videos, Web pages or applications being used by the instructor for demonstration. Interaction can be via voice (using a headset), through text chat, graphic elements and a limited repertory of "gestures" such as raise hand, smile, approve/disprove, applaud and select one element among

multiple choices. Another interesting feature is that the Instructor can share desktop with students; thus, using directly the computer screen to demonstrate whatever the instructor is doing with the computer. In addition, the whole session can be recorded and reused by students in different times or different sections of the course. Furthermore, it can be converted into a video clip that can be published independently of the course. Academic Computing provides training about Blackboard Collaborate but also many video demonstrations and step guides can be found in the Internet.

TurnitIn Assignments

Quite often an instructor or course developer wants that assignments such as essays, projects and research papers are automatically checked for similarity with previous assignments presented by students. This is an effective way of avoiding plagiarism attempts and provides orientation to students about adequate ways of using and citing external sources. In these cases, the instructor will not select in ANGEL a regular assignment drop-box, but a "TurnitIn Drop Box". Then, when the assignments are submitted, the instructor will open the drop-box, select the students' scripts and click 'Submit Paper' for starting the plagiarism check. In a few seconds or minutes, depending of the number of papers, TurnitIn will return a report with the percentage of similarities found and the corresponding sections of the paper will be highlighted in several colors that signify degrees of similarity.

There are a few technical norms regarding use of the above instructional materials. Images can be directly inserted documents elaborated with word processor or in ANGEL web pages. Documents and PowerPoint presentations must be converted to PDF prior to upload to the course; thus, avoiding issues of incompatibility with students' software. Videos and audio can be embedded in web pages and they play in a small virtual console with controls, like the one you see when playing a YouTube video. All other resources must be attached as files within a web-page and the user will click on the link to download the resource. Finally, extremely large files need to be distributed in CDs, DVDs or flash drives; they cannot be uploaded in a course where the storage space is shared with many others.

You may apply the following general rules for deciding what materials to use in a course:

- The main criterion is how materials relate to the learning objectives. What is this resource for? What function does it meet in the module? If you have no response to these questions or are in doubt, discard the resource.
- Use materials that appeal different types of learners; those that like to visualize everything, those that prefer straight text, those that need to discuss every topic with other students;
- Include explanatory notes that tell the student exactly what to do with this material; a health practice video captured from *YouTube* can be very interesting but if you do not tell the student what you expect her/him to do with this video it is meaningless. Then, you may write "Watch video XXX and take notes about procedures to measure blood pressure; then, go to the discussion in the next forum and explain correct practices or errors that you observed."
- With no exception, you must identify the source of each material that is not your original product. Use a consistent reference style for that, such as APA or MLA. Many guides for citing audiovisual resources can be found in the Web.
- Every URL link used must be annotated; in other words briefly describe the content and indicate the source in APA or MLA style. Therefore, if the link is changed over time it will be easy to find a replacement. [QM8.3]

- Be aware that some students may have disabilities that prevent them to access auditory or visual material. Then, include accessible replacements such as the script of a recorded interview or a video. Every image must be tagged with a word description of its content. All this is known as ADA Standards and, again, many sources in the Web explain how to use basic accessibility criteria. [QM8.1, QM8.2]
- A common question of instructors is: How many resources must I use in a module? The answer is given by your teaching practice: Whatever students working in direct interaction with you would be able to manage during a lecture period. Sometimes, you can include a little more if there are resources to be used optionally by students. Follow the general rule of making your modules varied, appealing, but not overwhelming. [QM6.4, QM6.7]

5) Include engaging discussions in most modules

Every module in your course should reflect some level of discussion. The discussion ensures that your students are engaging with the course content, and the careful use of discussion prompts will help guide the conversation around assigned readings, case studies and related materials for that particular lesson. Rather than leaving an open topic for students to initiate a discussion, provide a starting point and allow the conversation to develop.

For example, instead of:	Write:
"Post your thoughts about chapter 2."	"In what way does the author incorporate logos, ethos and pathos into his personal narrative? Which rhetorical element was strongest? How did that affect your impression of the character's journey?"
Or, instead of: "Define a mathematical function."	Write: "What applications of mathematical functions can you find in daily life? Can you describe an example indicating the properties of a certain function?

In the two following pages, you will see two examples of instructional modules. Be aware that *Element 4*, "lectures", and *Element 6, "*assessment", were stripped out for reasons of brevity. A full-fledged module would include the text and image of the lectures or activities and the questions or instructions of assignments.

After the examples, you will find the actual module template that you can copy/paste in a Word document and fill-in with information of your own, and then send to your associate instructional designer. She or he will insert this information in the corresponding course shell for your review. If you have sufficient experience with the course management system, you may decide to use these templates as drafts and copy/paste the information in the course shell on your own.

Sample Module #1

INSS 777

Element 1: At-A-Glance

This module introduces the fundamentals of Security+ network security. Students will see why network security is important and learn to define information security and its associated terminology. Students will also explore the CompTIA Security+ certification for IT professionals and survey the types of careers open in the information security field. Students will discover who is responsible for attacking information and the systems that store, process, and exchange that information. They will examine some of the motives attackers have for striking and damaging computer systems and explore the types of attacks that attackers unleash. With this information, students can begin to organize a sound defense to attempt to thwart their attacks.

The amount of subject matter to cover in this unit will last at least 3-5 hours over the first week.

Element 2: Learning Objectives

After completing this module, students will be able to:
-- Identify the challenges for information security
-- List and define information security terminology
-- Describe information security careers
-- Develop attacker profiles
-- Identify denial of service attacks

Graded items for this module include:

Labs
Quiz
Discussion

Element 3: Readings

Required readings
-- Chapter 1: Introduction Security Fundamentals
-- Chapter 2: Attackers and Their Attacks

Element 4: Lectures / Exercises / Activities

Lecture 1: Information Security Fundamentals
Lab 1.3 - Risk Analysis / Risk Assessment
Lab 1.4 - Risk Analysis & Recommendations

Lecture 2: Attackers & Their Attacks
Lab 2.2 - Research DoS and DDoS Attacks

Element 5: Discussion

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), the Sarbanes-Oxley Act (Sarbox) and the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (GLBA) are three recent federal laws that are intended to protect private data. Do they go far enough? Research the basics of these three acts. In your opinion, are they sufficient? Make two recommendations per act that you think would make them better in a 350-500 word response.

Element 6: Assessment

Module 1 Quiz - This quiz focuses on Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 in the textbook.

Sample Module #2

ENGL 102

Element 1: At-A-Glance

Speech is an art form that people seldom stop to appreciate or study. It is around us everywhere: on television and radio, in the classroom, on the stage. Most of the time, we tune out speeches, especially those from politicians. But informed voters make informed decisions and paying attention to how speeches are constructed and delivered is one way you can go to the polls armed with knowledge.

This module will last two weeks, concluding with your first major essay assignment.

Graded items for this module include:

Quiz	Writing Workshop
Discussion	Essay

Element 2: Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, you will:
- Understand the basics of rhetoric
- Learn and apply rhetorical terms
- Learn and apply rhetorical principles of analysis
- Find rhetorical elements in speeches

Element 3: Readings

Required readings
-- Module 3: Study of Rhetoric in Speech
-- Statement by Alabama Clergymen
-- Letter from a Birmingham Jail

Recommended readings
- The Basics of Aristotelian Rhetoric
- How to Use the Three Rhetorical Styles
- Basic Questions for Rhetorical Analysis

Element 4: Lectures / Exercises / Activities

Lecture 1: Rhetoric
Color Coding Exercise

Lecture 2: Rhetoric Applied
Case Study #1 – The West Wing
Case Study #2 – Letter from a Birmingham Jail

Element 5: Discussion

Think about the assumptions you and others have about a specific topic -- politics, religion or education, for example. What are your assumptions on the topic? What are others' assumptions? Describe how you handle differences in these assumptions, especially when you don't share the implicit position. Share a situation in which you changed your mind on some more or less fundamental belief related to the topic you just above described. In a 200-word response, explain what convinced you to do so.

Element 6: Assessment

Please go to the WRITING WORKSHOP forum and begin to work on your first major essay for this class. Remember, all of the pre-writing activities count toward your final grade; so, be sure to do them. They'll also help you develop your essay before you turn it in. After completing the WRITING WORKSHOP activities, go to the ASSIGNMENTS folder and select Module 1 to submit your essay as an attachment.

MODULE TEMPLATE

(This template is based on *Quality Matters Rubric*, duplicate as many times as modules you have)

Pre-Assessment (optional)

Pre-assessment evaluates a student's readiness for 1) taking an online course; 2) having the technical skills for an online course; 3) or determining prerequisite information before engaging with new content. Include a pre-assessment questionnaire.

Module Overview

One common question of students when taking distance study is "What is involved in this module?" This question can be answered by including a short document at top of the module or after the pre-assessment that indicates the following:

- ❑ Topic(s) for this module: A narrative summary
- ❑ Expected time of engagement: Number of hours
- ❑ Relevant book chapters: Just indicate chapter numbers
- ❑ Expected activities: what activities are required and optional

Learning Objectives

Learning objectives should include a lead-in statement such as, "Upon successful completion of this module, students will be able to..." Module objectives must include the actions, performance criteria, and conditions of what the student will be able to do. When developing learning objectives, list verbs that demonstrate a measurable outcome. Place the verb at the beginning of the objective.

Required readings

Reading assignments are required. Specify chapters, pages, documents, slides, web sites, multimedia, etc. Some instructors also provided guided reading suggestions or points to look out for in the reading. Any attachments for reading assignments should be in PDF or RTF (Rich Text Format) to ensure cross-platform compatibility for student users.

Activity Guides (write comments, short essays or tutorials for each important topic)

The activity guides form the heart of the module; a module may involve 3 to 7 activity guides, depending of the time of engagement assigned to the module. Imagine these activities as prompts for the student during each session of individual work (1 to 3 ½ hours).

The guides should:

- summarize key topics of readings;
- clarify aspects that are missing or not sufficiently exposed in the readings;
- point at connections with other topics;
- explain procedures;
- provide an interactive exercise for the entire class or for groups.

In short, maintain a teaching presence as if you were in contact with a class for the duration of the module (you are really there but at-a-distance).

Guide 1: <topic>

Guide 2: <topic>

Guide 3: <topic>

Discussion Forum (write 1-3 prompts for student discussion):

Written Assignment (write clear instructions about content, format and evaluation criteria or rubric)

- Content guidelines (what is about, sources, expected sections, quality criteria)
- Format guidelines (APA or MLA style, number of pages, number of sources, etc.)

Quiz or End-of-Module-Test

Just indicate content, number of questions and source; specific items will be added later in the course management system. One reliable source for quizzes is textbook publishers. Find out if the book or books that you use for your course have an Instructor Manual or a special item bank that is distributed only to instructors. A common practice of instructors is to set time for tests to stimulate that students are well prepared before beginning. Access to a test can be controlled either with a password or setting a start and end date.

END OF TEMPLATE

6) Special considerations about assessment

Assessment activities are keys to assure learning in an online or hybrid course; if assessment is faulty, the instructor does not have a means of determining whether the students have learned or not what was expected. The following table will help developers and instructors to plan the assessment activities.

*Learning assessment activities**:***

Today's conception of a learning evaluation for on-line and distance training programs is that evaluation is also a learning tool, not only a technique for determining achievements. Therefore, evaluation activities are learning activities as well. It is customary to divide them into ***formative***, when they provide the participant with feedback within a unit or module, and ***summative*****,** when they allow an appreciation of the achievements of an entire course or several course modules. As was noted above, any instructional activity may be used also to assess learning; for this reason, some names will be repeated.

Types	***Examples***
Formative	
- Questions inserted in the instructional text	An instruction module about the employee's motivation includes questions about internal and external incentives.
- Interaction in discussion sessions	In an on-line course, the instructor evaluates a participant's contribution to the discussion based on three criteria: quantity, usefulness for the group, and use of references.
- Module or unit test	At the end of the budget module, there is an evaluation questionnaire based on multiple-choice questions.
- Interactive assignment	The public safety module includes a series of situations in which the participant must evaluate the potential risks and suggest safety strategies.
Summative	
- Case study	The Urban Planning course includes the case of a municipality with large expanses of poverty. The participants must review the sociological and town information in order to propose solutions.
- Individual or group project	In the Municipal Budgeting course, the participants must present a simulated budget based on certain allocated amounts plus tax collection.

- Field activity report	In the same Urban Planning course, the participants visit one of the city's zones and use an observation protocol to collect data. Then they prepare a report.
-Participant's portfolio	In a Human Resource Evaluation course, the participant collects evaluation formats applicable to different types of positions or posts.

Evaluation of the course and revisions

Evaluation is a permanent process during the development and delivery of online learning. However, evaluation has a preeminent role in two special moments:

- When the development team finishes the first draft of the course
- When students finish or are near the finalization of the course.

In the first moment, BSU Online Policy states that the content specialist(s) and the instructional designer apply the *Quality Matters Rubric* in order to determine if quality expectations have been met. In the second moment, it is customary to apply an end-of-term survey to students and instructors. A sample of this type of survey is included also as appendix.

Achieving Optimal Learner Support and Accessibility

These two crucial issues of online and hybrid courses are briefly discussed here, although in the training programs provided by Academic Computing there is more abundant information about them. Learner support refers in this context to technical guidelines available for both students and faculty within or in proximity to the learning management system used for the online offerings.

Learner support resources at BSU Online

- Faculty Help Tab in ANGEL, this tab is included on top of all courses. It is visible only to faculty members and it includes a trove of self-help materials and tutorials in diverse aspects of ANGEL and associated software and courseware. [QM7.1, QM7.3]
- Help Desk TAB in ANGEL, this tab is visible to everybody and includes the typical "frequently asked questions" about the learning management system and links to diverse aids. [QM7.1, QM7.3]
- ANGEL self-help guides embedded in course templates; these are text-visual aids about the most common operations in the learning management system such as reading announcements, sending email, posting in forums, submitting assignments, etc. Optionally, they can be inserted on a course template or linked for external access. [QM7.1, QM7.4]
- Online Course Literacy Module in the Freshman Seminar. This activity will start in Fall 2011; it will provide initial orientation about online instruction for students just beginning at BSU. It is assumed that transfers from Community Colleges already have some familiarity with online learning.

Accessibility Issues

By Federal Law, comprised in the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 (Amendment of 1973) and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, also known as ADA, all information technology products including online courses must be accessible to people with disabilities. This means that every resource displayed in a course must have affordances for people that are vision or hearing impaired. The most common provisions that need to be applied in all courses (Assistive Technology Act, Section 508) are as follows [QM8.1, QM8.2, QM8.3 and QM8.4]:

- videos with audio need to be captioned; if the original video does not have captions, a text script must be included
- audio files need to have text transcripts
- images need alternative text or descriptions; in ANGEL, this is can be done by opening the image properties and fill-in a field called "Alternative Text" with a brief description of what the image represents.
- color should not be used to convey meaning; essentially avoid coloring text to indicate emphasis (use bold instead) or to distinguish elements in the visual presentation of a page
- tables should include row and column headers, this relatively easy requirement must be enforced
- never include a URL link from the Internet in a course without a brief annotation that contains full reference to it in text (see below).

Special consideration must be given to lectures recorded by instructors. In the BSU Online system, lectures are usually recorded using Elluminate using PowerPoint presentations or HTML pages as sources of visual information. Therefore, there are two ways in which the instructor can achieve Section 508 compliance:

- Include notes with the PowerPoint slides and upload these notes in PDF format as attachment to the link where the recorded lecture is shown to students.
- Use voice-to text software, found in the Web, for creating a rough text version of the audio recording that can be edited and later uploaded as a text file. As this type of software is constantly evolving, the user of this manual can search in Google using "voice to text software" or "speech to text software" and find free and commercial programs that do the job.

The following URL links may help instructors and designers to achieve the desired compliance with the referenced normative:

Assistive Technology Act of 1973 as amended in 1998; this government source has the complete normative in PDF format, which is readable by screen readers. Pay attention to Section 508 norms.
http://www.section508.gov/docs/AssistiveTechnologyActOf1998Full.pdf

A practical guide to ADA compliance concerning Online Courses; most of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, amended in 2010, is concerned with architectural design and facilities for the disabled (www.ada.gov). Des Moines Community College summarized a set of recommendations that apply to online courses.
https://go.dmacc.edu/online/Pages/adacompliance.aspx

Copyright

Copyright law grants the right to 1) reproduce work and prepare derivative works; 2) distribute copies or transfer/lend ownership; 3) perform the work; and 4) display / transmit the work publicly. Copyright does not protect an idea, but rather the *expression* of an idea. The expression of an idea may take the form of literary works, whether in print or digital, dramatic works such as plays and performances, music, pictures and photographs, audiovisuals, graphics and sound recordings.

Once a copyright has expired, the work falls into the public domain. However, due to various extensions and changes to copyright law over the last two hundred years, there are many factors that impact how long a work may be protected.

Works Published in the US	Requirements	Term of Copyright
Before 1923	None	Public domain
Between 1923 and March 1, 1978	Published without a copyright symbol	Public domain
Between 1923 and 1963	Published with notice, but copyright was not renewed	Public domain
Between 1923 and 1963	Published with notice AND copyright was renewed	95 years after publication date
Between 1964 and 1977	Published with notice	28 years for first term; automatically extended for 67 years for second term
Created on / after January 1, 1978	Work is fixed in tangible medium of expression	70 years after death of author; if work is of corporate authorship, 95 years from publication or 120 years from creation, whichever comes first

Fair use is a common justification for using or copying protected works. To determine fair use, we must consider four factors:

1. The purpose of the work
   - Criticism, commentary, reporting, teaching, scholarship, research
   - Transformative (parody, pastiche, instructional materials)

2. The nature of the work
   - Work is primarily factual
   - More protection for unpublished, new knowledge, highly creative works, consumables

3. The amount and substantiality used
   - Limited & reasonable portions used (10 percent of a body of work / medium)

4. The impact of usage upon the work's potential market or value
   - Minimal economic impact
   - Out of print vs. commercially available
   - Copyright holder cannot be identified

Appendix 1: End-of-Term Survey

Bowie State University
Student Questionnaire--<Term> <Year>
Instructor Performance and Course Rating-Online or Blended Course Version

Instructor Name	Course Number

Please provide your candid response to this questionnaire. Results will be used for course and instructional improvements. Use a black pen or pencil to fill all bubbles completely and darkly. Thank you. Office of Planning and Assessment.

INSTRUCTOR QUALITY

Score below as follows: 1- Always; 2- Often; 3- Sometimes; 4- Seldom; 5- Never; 6- Not Applicable

1	2	3	4	5	6	No.	
						1.	The instructor's classroom performance indicates planning and preparation to teach this course.
						2.	The instructor clearly communicated the goals and objectives for the course.
						3.	The instructor uses a variety of teaching resources other than the textbook.
						4.	The instructor's voice and speech are audible and clear.
						5.	The assignments and exams are clear.
						6.	The instructor uses a variety of technological tools to enhance the course instruction.
						7.	The instructor shows enthusiasm for teaching this course.
						8.	The instructor's standards and method of student evaluation are clear.
						9.	The instructor's feedback on assignments and exams is reasonably prompt.
						10.	The instructor demonstrates knowledge of the subject matter.
						11.	The instructor's availability for support outside the classroom (i.e., office hours, email, and phone) is satisfactory.
						12.	The instructor's standards and expectations encourage me to put effort into this course to succeed.

COURSE CONTENT

Score below as follows: 1- Always; 2- Often; 3- Sometimes; 4- Seldom; 5- Never; 6- Not Applicable

1	2	3	4	5	6	No.	
						13.	The course information further developed my knowledge in this area.
						14.	The course activities enhanced my learning the course content.
						15.	The writing assignments improved my writing skills.
						16.	The oral assignments improved my presentation skills.
						17.	The course activities improved my computer technology skills.
						18.	The library assignments improved my skills in researching information.
						19.	The textbook or required book(s) were useful

LAB OR CLINICAL EXPERIENCES

Please, respond to the following only if the course has a laboratory, field experience or clinical work

Score below as follows: 1- Always; 2- Often; 3- Sometimes; 4- Seldom; 5- Never; 6- Not Applicable

1	2	3	4	5	6	No.	
						20.	Lab or clinical experiences contributed to my understanding of the course theories and concepts.
						21.	The instructor clearly explained laboratory or clinical experiments or procedures.

SPECIFIC ONLINE COURSE FEATURES

Score below as follows: 1- Always; 2- Often; 3- Sometimes; 4- Seldom; 5- Never; 6- Not Applicable

1	2	3	4	5	6	No.	
						22.	The course information documents or syllabus provides an accurate view of the course.
						23.	The online content guides facilitate understanding of the subject matter.
						24.	The online discussions provide great opportunities for learning
						25.	The visual or multimedia resources in the course contribute to enhance learning.
						26.	The online material of the course is well organized.
						27.	It is easy to navigate through the windows and pages of the online course.
						28.	The connection speed with BSU Online is satisfactory
						29.	The advice provided by the helpdesk is useful
						30.	Taking a course online is a pleasant experience

STUDENT LEARNING AND SATISFACTION

31.	On average, how many hours per week to you spend preparing for this course? Write an integer number	
32.	What percentage of the module discussions have you attended? Select the best match	100() 90() 75() 50() 30() 10()
33.	The instructor's level of respect for the student is	Very high() High() Low() Very low()
34.	My overall satisfaction with the instructor's teaching presence online is	Very high() High() Low() Very low()
35.	My overall satisfaction with the online course is	Very high() High() Low() Very low()

OPEN COMMENT

36. If you wish to provide more information, write here any other comment that could help us to evaluate and improve this course, the instructor, the course materials, or the online services. This space has a maximum of 1200 characters including spaces.

Appendix 2: Rubric for Evaluating Course Quality (To be replaced by QM)

This rubric is applied in collaboration of faculty peer reviewer(s) and instructional designer (Academic Computing) by the end of the development process. It contains open questions to allow users adding suggestions that will enhance the course quality. The questions are derived from the *Quality Matters Rubric*, which is a copyrighted product therefore not directly reproducible here.

Course ID: Evaluator:

***Form AC-01* - Course Shell Evaluation Questionnaire for Faculty and Instructional Designers**

	Course Rationale (as per syllabus information)	**Answer**
1.	Course objectives clearly stated in Syllabus or special document	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
2.	Syllabus indicates how the course relates to professional activities	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
3.	Syllabus states how the course applies to <add discipline here> profession	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
4.	The course matches the needs of the <add discipline here> curriculum	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
5.	Syllabus indicates prerequisite knowledge and skills for the course	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
	Objectives	
6.	Objectives defined in terms of changes in knowledge and skills of students	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
7.	Objectives differentiate general goals and specific outcomes	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
8.	Objectives represent measurable outcomes	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
9.	Objectives cover all of the course's modules or units	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
10.	Objectives are appropriate to the participant's entry level of knowledge	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
	Course Content	
11.	There is good match between objectives and content topics	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
12.	Content is up to date regarding <add discipline here> disciplines	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
13.	Content is comparable to other programs of similar level	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
14.	Content is organized using a logical sequence	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
15.	The methodological approach of the course is explained to students	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
16.	Content has adequate depth and breadth for the intended degree	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
17.	Examples or cases from the workplace are considered	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
18.	Course shows sensibility to ethnic, cultural and socioeconomic diversity	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
19.	Language of course materials is appropriate to entry level of students	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
20.	Course includes Internet resources to promote active learning	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
	Unit or Topic Organization	
21.	The number of modules or units is appropriate in terms of term weeks	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
22.	The amount of work of each module or unit is adapted to the time available	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
23.	Each new module builds upon the previous, showing instructional sequence	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
	Student Assessment	
24.	The intended evaluation activities cover previously stated course objectives	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
25.	There is balance between theoretical and practical aspects in assessment	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
26.	The evaluation strategies are appropriate according to course objectives	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
27.	The evaluation activities reflect cases or problems in the workplace	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
28.	Orientation about criteria or expectations of assessment are clear	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
29.	All assessment activities are included in the course grade-book	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )
30.	Assessment activities are adequately weighted in the grade-book	Yes( ) No( ) NA( )

Use separate supplement to include specific comments for improving the course.

Form AC-01 – Supplement

Qualitative Observations	Suggested Changes
Rationale	
Objectives	
Course Content	
Units or Modules	
Assessment	
Course Technology	
Other	

Appendix 3: Comparison of Quality Matters and Course Redesign Criteria

Quality Matters©

1.Course Overview and Introduction

-1.1 It is clear how to start
-1.2 Mode of instruction stated
-1.3 Etiquette expectations
-1.4 Instructor self-introduction
-1.5 Students asked to introduce themselves
-1.6 Minimum student preparation stated
-1.7 Minimum technical skills stated

2.Learning Objectives

-2.1 Measurable outcomes
-2.2 Module/unit objectives consistent with course's
-2.3 Written from student's perspective
-2.4 How to achieve objectives is stated
-2.5 Appropriate to the course level

3. Assessment and Measurement

-3.1 Congruence with objectives, activities and resources
-3.2 Course grading policy stated
-3.3 Describe evaluation criteria
-3.4 Instruments sequential, varied and content-related
-3.5 Self-check with feedback provided

4. Resources and Materials

-4.1 Contribute to achievement of course and module o's
-4.2 Relationship materials to activities is explained
-4.3 Materials depth, breadth & currency adequate
-4.4 Al resources appropriately cited

5. Learner Engagement

-5.1 Learning activities (LA) promote objectives
-5.2 LA promote interaction at all levels
-5.3 Instructor responsiveness & availability stated
-5.4 State interaction requirements

6. Course Technology (tools and media)

-6.1 Support objectives and content
-6.2 Support engagement & active learning
-6.3 Course navigation is easy & consistent
-6.4 Students have access to technologies in use
-6.5 Compatible with current standards for delivery
-6.6 Access instructions clear and sufficient
-6.7 Full advantage of technology

7. Learner Support

-7.1 Link to technical support included
-7.2 How tech sup can assist student stated
-7.3 How support services can assist student stated
-7.4 Instructions explain tech basics or link to resources

8. Accessibility

-8.1 Incorporates ADA Standards
-8.2 Provide equivalents to auditory and visual material
-8.3 Links are self-descriptive and meaningful
-8.4 Screen readability

NCAT Course Redesign©

Principle #1: Redesign the whole course

Principle #3: Provide students with individualized assistance

Principle #4: Build in ongoing assessment and prompt (automated) feedback

Principle #5: Ensure sufficient time on task and monitor student progress

Principle #2: Encourage active learning

NOTES