Whereas, at the November 2012 meeting of the Faculty Senate, the Senate approved the adoption of the UHV Online Course Inventory, a rubric developed with the goal of “developing minimum standards criteria to be used to collect data regarding online course assessment in order to meet SACS requirements.” The process was deemed to be in keeping with the UHV Faculty Handbook, Section 4.4.13 “Administrator Observation of Courses.” The process was implemented late in the 2012-2013 academic year, and all Schools reviewed all online courses over the next few semesters. The process still exists (on paper), although centralized monitoring of the process has waned.

And whereas, in the intervening six years, ongoing developments in technology, updated and increasingly comprehensive accessibility-related legislation, and program changes at UHV suggest that it is time to update and augment the course inventory rubric and process in an effort to *promote course accessibility* and *maintain course quality*.

**Promoting course accessibility:** As highlighted by the work of the all-university Advisory Committee on Technology Accessibility led by Rebecca Lake (UHV’s Title IX Coordinator), our understanding of the requirements of “accessibility” and universal design (<http://www.cast.org/our-work/about-udl.html#.W9DDUGhKiUn>) under federal and state regulations has deepened, and the scope of what is required has broadened. Although the task of making our courses and course shells more comprehensively accessible to students of varying dis/abilities is daunting and will be time-consuming, this is not something we have the luxury of avoiding or delaying—legally or ethically.

**Maintaining course quality:** In addition, as announced in an e-mail on May 21, 2018, UHV’s Executive Council approved incentives/stipends for those who build or modify courses that will be offered through Academic Partnerships (AP). Given that maintaining course quality has been one of the concerns raised by many faculty during the pre-contract conversations with AP, it is imperative that we create some sort of mechanism for performing an internal “audit” of courses that are developed or modified for that purpose.

And whereas, the necessary and proposed changes to the already-existing UHV Online Course Inventory can be found in Appendix A of this resolution.

And whereas, the proposed timeline for AP implementation (i.e., full rollout Fall 2019) means that a significant amount of course development (especially for courses offered in AP programs) will likely occur during the Spring 2019 semester. Therefore, there is some urgency to establish our own process for evaluating course quality. Timely consideration of these proposed changes by the Faculty Council on December 7 would insure that the updated rubric is in place before semester break so that those who are engaging in course development over the break or during Spring 2019 have access to this set of guidelines as they are working on their courses.

Therefore, be it resolved that the following section be added to the Faculty Manual (in Section 4.4---Course Policies)

**4.4.14 Online Course Review Process** In an effort to maintain high-quality and accessible instruction—particularly in online courses—newly developed or significantly redesigned courses will be required to meet course quality and universal design (i.e., ADA/accessibility) standards. A review of the newly designed/redesigned course shell may be requested by the faculty member; initiated as part of a periodic review of all courses within a program, Department, or School; or required in conjunction with a course development/redesign incentive (e.g., as offered by the Provost office). These course reviews will be completed through a peer review process using a pre-determined rubric to insure consistency and compliance with accessibility standards. Where reviews are conducted connected to course development incentives, areas of concern and/or deficiency must be addressed and the course re-reviewed before the incentive will be disbursed. The current rubric will be published on UHV intranet.

# Appendix A: UHV Online Course Inventory

These changes emerged from several conversations with UHV Instructional Designers and Instructional Technologists. In addition, I (Joann Olson) have been a participant in the Advisory Committee on Technology Accessibility since its inception; I teach in a fully online program, and I am the former chair of SoEHPHD’s online course review committee. To update the existing rubric, I looked at our existing rubric, an exemplar course inventory from Open SUNY (<http://oscqr.org/>), materials from Quality Matters and Online Learning Consortium (noted thought leaders regarding course quality for online education), the online quality design principles rubric from the University of Central Oklahoma Online (<https://cece.uco.edu/Design.html>), Blackboard’s new “exemplar course” rubric, and the rubric that Academic Partnerships will use to provide advisory feedback on all courses offered in the UHV programs they are involved with.

**[Updated]**

**UHV Online Course Review Rubric**

General Course Information

Faculty Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Semester: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Course Name:

Course Number and Title:

Course Description:

Course Objectives and Topics:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1. Interaction and Engagement** | |
| 1.1 Welcome Message | Welcome message from the instructor includes the purpose and structure of the course as well as basic information for navigating the course structure; where appropriate, tips for succeeding in this course are outlined. |
| 1.2 Instructor Contact Information | Instructor contact information is provided. |
| 1.3 Instructor Response | Expectations are announced for instructor response to student communication (e.g., questions, e-mail). |
| 1.4 Instructor Availability | Office hours (including virtual office hours) are posted. |
| 1.5 Participation Requirements | Required participation is explained; requirements for learner interaction and anticipated weekly workload (e.g., 15-20 hours/week) are outlined. |
| 1.6 Communication | Guidelines for proper etiquette (netiquette) are explained. |
| 1.7 Student-Instructor Interaction | Learning activities promote student-instructor interaction. |
| 1.8 Student-Content Interaction | Learning activities promote student-content interaction; course design promotes active learning. |
| 1.9 Student-Student Interaction | Learning activities promote student-student interaction; activities are intended to build a sense of course community and collaborative learning; students have opportunity to interact with peers. |
| 1.10 Content/Format | Content is presented in a variety of formats. |
| 1.11 Collaboration/ Team Work | Where appropriate, team tasks are clearly defined; methods to form teams are announced; expectations of team participation are defined. |
| **2. Ensuring Rigor of Course and Course Material** | |
| 2.1 Instructional Material | An explanation is provided on how to navigate the instructional material; instructions are clear and learners know how to navigate and what tasks are due. |
| 2.2 Schedule | The course schedule is posted that includes due dates for assignments and activities. |
| 2.3 Syllabus | The syllabus is posted in an apparent location on the course homepage; syllabus is a fully accessible Word document or pdf (or created as a Blackboard “content item” to insure accessibility). |
| 2.5 Identified Learning Objectives | Course learning objectives/outcomes are clear, measurable, and suited to the level of the course. |
| 2.7 Feedback | Estimated timelines for grading turnaround are posted within the course shell. |
| 2.8 Intellectual Development | Assignments are designed to foster progression of thinking. |
| 2.9 Required and Optional Readings | The distinction between required and optional materials is clearly explained. |
| 2.10 Appropriate Material | Instructional materials are up-to-date, reflecting best practices within the academic discipline and in online course design. (If the course relies on electronic reserves or other materials not posted in the course shell or syllabus, a list of these resources will be provided to reviewer beforehand.) |
| **3. Educational Effectiveness** | |
| 3.1 Grading Policy | Course grading policies, including consequences of late submissions, are clearly stated in the course shell or syllabus. |
| 3.2 Multiple Methods | Course includes frequent, varied, and appropriate methods to assess learners’ mastery of content. |
| 3.3 Assessment | Assessments align with learning objectives. |
| 3.4 Self-Assessment | Learners have opportunities to review their performance and assess their own learning throughout the course (pre-tests, automated self-tests, reflective assignments, etc.). |
| 3.5 Performance Criteria | Performance criteria for assignments (i.e., rubrics or other guidelines) are clear. |
| 3.6 Due Dates | Assignment due dates are consistent across the course. (For example, assignments are due on the same day of the week every week, discussion board posts are due on the same day, as well as discussion board replies are due on the same day.) |
| 3.7 Academic Credibility | Measures are taken to prevent cheating (e.g., assignments that require application or specific assignments are given that are unlikely to be assigned in other classes, etc.). |
| 3.8 Academic Integrity | Policies regarding academic integrity, plagiarism, grievances, and so on are posted in the syllabus and/or course shell. |
| **4. Technology Used** | |
| 4.1 Starting Point | There is an evident starting point to begin the course on the course home page. |
| 4.2 Assignment Submission | Directions on how and where to submit assignments are stated. |
| 4.3 Student Support | Students are informed of technology requirements (e.g., webcam, MyMathLab software, etc.); instructions are provided on using the course technologies. |
| 4.4 Technology Support | There are links within the course to the IT help desk and to Online Technology Specialists. |
| 4.5 Online Equipment & Tutorials | There are links within the course to the online equipment requirement & tutorials. |
| 4.6 Student Services & Resources | Links to UHV Campus Life (including Student Services, Counseling, etc.) are easily located within the course. |
| 4.7 Multi-modal Support | Various technologies and strategies are used to deliver content. |
| 4.8 Security of Student Work | All materials and student assessments are password protected. |
| **5. Currency of Materials** | |
| 5.1 Currency | Links to online activities, assignment dropboxes, discussion posts, and so on are all active; URLs include no broken links. |
| 5.2 Assignment Deadlines and Adaptive Release | Due dates, content display dates, and other deadlines have been updated for the current semester. |
| 5.3 Professionalism | Course has been carefully edited; course shell is free of grammatical and spelling errors. |
| **6. Policies on Intellectual Property** | |
| 6.1 Intellectual Property | Intellectual property has been acknowledged and verified. |
| 6.2 Referenced Material | All resources and materials used in the course are appropriately cited. |
| **7. Accessibility and Universal Design for Learning** | |
| 7.1 Accommodations | Course (or syllabus) includes accessibility statement with contact information for UHV's Office of Disability Services. |
| 7.2 Simplified Formatting | By applying the principles of Universal Design for Learning, course is designed to promote accessibility for all learners, including--but not necessarily limited to: closed captioning, text formatting that enhances readability (simple fonts; avoiding blinking/flashing text; pre-defined slide layout with unique slide titles; simple, non-automatic transitions between slides, etc.). |
| 7.3 Accessible Documents | Any posted pdfs are accessible to screen-readers; whenever possible, content is created directly in Blackboard (using “Build Content/Item”) rather than as attached files. |
| 7.4 Accessible Hyperlinks and Alt Tags | Hyperlinks are descriptive (avoid using "click here"); “Alt” tags are provided for every non-text element. |
| 7.5 Reading Order | Use a logical reading order, Styles and descriptive headings to allow readers to navigate documents. |
| 7.6 Accessibility of Embedded Files | Attached files have been carefully checked for the following “typical” problem areas:   * Images have alt-tags * Pdfs are accessible and properly tagged * Word documents use styles/headings * Videos have closed-captioning * PowerPoint presentations use standard format (titles/body text);  no slide transitions or animations; slides are properly captioned (if there is a voiceover). |

**EVALUATION SUMMARY**

**Strengths noted in course:**

**Areas that need modification and updates:**

**Timeline and plan for improvement:**

**[Original]** University of Houston-Victoria

ONLINE COURSE INVENTORY

General Course Information

Faculty Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Semester: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Course Name:

Course Number & Title:

Course Description:

Course Objectives & Topics:

|  | |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **1. Interaction** | | |
| 1.1 Welcome Message | Includes a welcome message from the instructor. | |
| 1.2 Instructor Contact Information | Instructor contact information is provided. | |
| 1.3 Instructor Response | Expectations are announced for instructor response to student communications. | |
| 1.4 Instructor Availability | Virtual office hours are posted. | |
| 1.5 Participation Requirements | Required participation is explained. | |
| 1.6 Communication | Guidelines for proper etiquette (netiquette) are explained. | |
| 1.7 Student-Instructor Interaction | Learning activities promote student-instructor interaction. | |
| 1.8 Student-Content Interaction | Learning activities promote student-content interaction. | |
| 1.9 Student-Student Interaction | Learning activities promote student-student interaction. | |
| 1.10 Collaboration/Team Work | Team tasks are clearly defined. | |
| 1.11 Team Formation | Methods to form teams are announced. | |
| 1.12 Team Expectations | Expectations of team participation are defined. | |
| **2. Ensuring rigor of material, courses, program & quality of instruction** | | |
| 2.1 Instructional Material | An explanation is provided on how to navigate the instructional material. | |
| 2.2 Accessibility | When applicable, online instruction complies with accommodation requirements for individual students. | |
| 2.3 Schedule | The course schedule is posted that includes due dates for assignments and activities. | |
| 2.4 Syllabus | The syllabus is posted in an apparent location on the course home page. | |
| 2.5 Identified Learning Objectives | Learning objectives are stated. | |
| 2.6 Learning Objectives | Course assignments align with learning objectives. | |
| 2.7 Feedback | Feedback on assignments is evident. | |
| 2.8 Intellectual Development | Assignments are designed to foster progression of thinking. | |
| 2.9 Required and Optional | The distinction between required and optional materials is clearly explained. | |
| **3. Educational effectiveness** | | |
| 3.1 Grading Policy | The grading policy for final course grade is outlined. | |
| 3.2 Multiple Methods | A minimum of 2 methods of assessment are used to evaluate student learning. | |
| 3.3 Assessment | Assessments align with learning objectives. | |
| 3.4 Performance Criteria | Performance criteria for assignments are clear. | |
| **4. Technology used** | | |
| 4.1 Starting Point | There is an evident starting point to begin the course on the course home page. | |
| 4.2 Assignment Submission | Directions on how and where to submit assignments are stated. | |
| 4.3 Student Support | Instructions are provided on using the course technologies. | |
| 4.4 Technology Support | There are links within the course to the IT help desk and to Online Technology Specialists. | |
| 4.5 Online Equipment & Tutorials: | There are links within the course to the online equipment requirement & tutorials. | |
| 4.6 Student Services & Resources | The UHV Student Services & Resources is linked within the course. | |
| 4.7 Multi-modal Support | Various technologies and strategies are used to deliver content. | |
| **5. Currency of materials, programs, & courses** | | |
| 5.1 Currency | Links to online activities are active. | |
| 5.2 Instructor Oversight | Instructor reviews all aspects of the course before it goes live. | |
| **6. Policies on intellectual property** | | |
| 6.1 Intellectual Property | Intellectual property has been acknowledged and verified. | |
| 6.2 Referenced Material | All resources and materials used in the course are appropriately cited. | |
| **7. Integrity of student work and credibility of degrees & credits** | | |
| 7.1 Academic Credibility | Measures are taken to prevent cheating. | |
| 7.2 Security of Student Work | All materials and student assessments are password protected. | |

**EVALUATION SUMMARY**

**Strengths noted in course:**

**Areas that need modification and updates:**

**Timeline and plan for improvement:**