Online Course Development – "Quality Matters" Checklist

This checklist is based on Quality Matters standards. Quality Matters is a research-based initiative founded by Maryland Online. Quality Matters was devised to assess and assure course quality by assessing components determined through research as necessary in the design of a high-quality online course. This extensive checklist was designed to assist instructors in developing courses that lead to student success.

Section One – Essential Components

☐ There is an obvious indication of where students need to click to "start" the course. (1.1)

☐ A statement provides navigational instructions to students regarding the overall organization of the course. (1.1)

☐ A welcome statement from the instructor introduces students to the course. (1.2)

☐ A statement describes the structure of the units or modules within the course. (1.2)

☐ Course level learning objectives are clearly articulated in terminology understandable by the student and describe student performance in specific, measurable terms. (2.1)

☐ Unit/module level learning objectives are clearly articulated in terminology understandable by the student and describe student performance in specific, measurable terms. (2.5)

☐ Course level learning objectives address content mastery, critical thinking skills, and core learning skills. (2.2)

☐ Unit/module level learning objectives address content mastery, critical thinking skills, and core learning skills. (2.2)

☐ Assessments measure and are consistent with the stated learning objectives. (3.1)

☐ The grading policy is clearly explained and easy to understand. (3.2)

☐ The instructional materials support the stated learning objectives and have sufficient breadth and depth for the student to learn the subject. (4.1)

☐ Instructional materials are presented in a format appropriate to the online environment, and are easily accessible to and usable by the student. (4.2)

☐ Instructional materials requiring the installation of software, plug-ins, codecs or other controls have been tested for ease of use. (4.2)

☐ Instructional materials requiring download have been tested on LAN, cable and dial-up connections. (4.2)

☐ The learning activities promote the achievement of stated objectives and learning outcomes. (5.1)

☐ A variety of learning activities that foster instructor-student, content-student and student-student interaction are included. (5.2)

☐ A statement lists clear standards for instructor response and availability (turn-around time for email, grade posting, etc.). (5.3)

☐ The course design prompts the instructor to be present, active, and engaged with the students. (5.5)

☐ It is clearly stated how tools and multimedia relate to the course learning objectives. (6.1)

☐ Statement in course explains to students how to gain access to ADA services on all three campuses. (8.1)

☐ Course is within Blackboard (an ADA approved Course Management System). If the course is not within Blackboard, Disability Services has reviewed the course for accessibility. (8.1)

Section Two – Recommended Components

☐ Netiquette expectations with regard to discussions and email communication are clearly stated. (1.3)

☐ The self-introduction by the instructor creates a sense of connection between the instructor and the students. It presents the instructor as professional as well as approachable. (1.4)

☐ Students are requested to introduce themselves to the class. (1.5)

☐ Minimum technology requirements, minimum student skills, and, if applicable, prerequisite knowledge in the discipline, are clearly stated. (1.6)

☐ Instructions to students on how to meet the learning objectives (what to do) are adequate and easy to understand. (2.4)

☐ The methods used for submitting assessments are appropriate for the distance learning environment. (3.4)

☐ "Self-check" or practice types of assignments are provided for quick student feedback. (3.5)

☐ The purpose of the course elements (content, instructional methods, technologies, and course materials) is evident. (4.3)

☐ The instructional materials, including supporting materials - such as manuals, videos, CD ROMs, and computer software – are consistent in organization. (4.4)

☐ All resources and materials used in the online course are appropriately cited. (4.5)

☐ The requirements for course interaction are clearly articulated. (5.4)

☐ The tools and media enhance student interactivity and guide the student to become a more active learner. (6.2)

☐ Technologies required for this course (including software, plug-ins or other controls) are either provided or easily downloadable. (6.3)

☐ The tools and media are compatible with existing standards of delivery modes. (6.4)

☐ Instructions on how to access resources at a distance are sufficient and easy for students to understand. (6.5)

☐ The course takes advantage of current course technologies. (6.6)

☐ The course instructions articulate or link to a clear description of the technical support offered. (7.1)

☐ Course instructions articulate or link to an explanation of how the institution's academic support system can assist the student in effectively using the resources provided. (7.2)

☐ Course instructions articulate or link to an explanation of how the institution's student support services can assist the student in effectively using the resources provided. (7.3)

☐ Course instructions articulate or link to tutorials and resources that answer basic questions related to research, writing, technology etc. (7.4)

☐ Web pages provide equivalent alternatives to auditory and visual content. (8.2)

☐ Web pages have links that are self-describing and meaningful. (8.3)

☐ The course demonstrates sensitivity to readability issues for students with disabilities. (8.4