The following pages contain some tools that can be used or adapted to evaluate different components of virtual classes:

- pages 2-12: tools for synchronous class sessions
- pages 13-19: tools for a virtual or online discussion
- pages 20-33: tools for a course website

Leader : _____ Observer: _____ Date of observation: / /_____

Class: _____

Area of focus	Aspects done well	Aspects that could be improved upon	Suggested action(s)
Interaction with students • Opening; rapport • Engagement with all sites • Questioning technique (enabling) • Student activities • General level of interactivity/dialogue			
Preparation • Student handouts/worksheets • Session/lesson planning (e.g. clear objectives; choice of activities; timing; integration with pre- & post –session activities)			

Technical facility • Camera setting • Operation of document camera • General keypad/ipad operation			
Presentation on camera Eye contact; movement; clothing; voice; camera shots; general demeanour			
Session/lesson delivery • Pace/coverage • Clarity of instructions • Coordination/management of student activities • Variety (visual; balance of activities)			

UNIVERSITY *of* TASMANIA **GUIDE TO PEER REVIEW OF TEACHING**

Use of this specific tool is not required by USC administration; it is intended as an example of best practices. Schools and departments may choose to create their own tool, edit this tool in any way that makes it a better fit, or use this tool as it is.

CET Synchronous Online Teaching Observation Checklist

The CET Synchronous Online Teaching Observation Checklist provides performance descriptions for four tiers of online instructional practices. The first, second, and third tiers include a progression of recommended teaching practices. The substandard tier includes items that are contrary to best practices and/or USC policies. The checklist can be used for two purposes. It can be used as a developmental tool to provide faculty formative feedback to enhance their teaching, showing progression over multiple observations. It can also be used as an evaluative tool to document evidence of teaching performance for promotion, tenure, or continuing appointment.

This checklist was developed to include recommended practices that can be implemented within a wide variety of teaching models, both traditional and innovative; it is editable so that schools may add or delete items to customize it to their needs. Checklist items are observable actions and behaviors of the instructor (observable during a single visited class session), not the behaviors of students.

Schools could determine how many criteria in each tier should be met in order to qualify for the various levels of advancement in the school. For example, a school could decide that for promotion from assistant to associate professor a faculty member should have none of the items checked in the Substandard Tier and all of the items checked in Tier 1.

Not Included in the Synchronous Online Classroom Teaching Observation Checklist

- Evaluation of course design, which is addressed in a separate [Synchronous Online Course Design Syllabus Review Checklist](#).

- Aspects of teaching that cannot be observed in the online environment.

- Best practices that are specific to certain fields, class types or instructional styles.

Recommended Observer Characteristics

- Has access to the synchronous session or a recording of the synchronous session.

- Observes a minimum of one class session. Two observations are recommended.

- Is familiar with the course learning objectives listed in the syllabus.

- Understands the content of the course well enough to evaluate effectiveness of instruction in that topic.

- Has been trained by CET or by a CET Faculty Fellow to use the checklist.

Instructions for Use

- Mark as present all checklist items observed during the class.

Each dimension in the checklist measures one or more criteria in [USC's Definition of Excellence in Teaching](#) and those criteria are noted next to the dimension name. The practices in Tiers 1, 2, and 3 are supported through training provided by CET's faculty institutes.

DIMENSION	SUBSTANDARD TIER	TIER 1	TIER 2	TIER 3
*USC Definition of Excellence in Teaching criteria measured by each dimension are noted.	Performing Below Minimum USC Teaching Policy Standard	Performing at Minimum USC Teaching Policy Standard	Performing at Proficient Level of Teaching Standard at USC	Performing at Excellence Level of Teaching Standard at USC
CLASS ORGANIZATION				
Instructional plan 5a, 5b*	☐ Instructor changes the established class session plan without prior notification to students.	☐ The class session demonstrates clear signs of planning and organization, and follows a logical flow.	☐ The class session includes student interaction with peers, content, and instructor.	☐ The class session includes instruction, formative assessment[1] and reflection components.
Communication of clear learning goals for the class session 6a*	☐ Instructor communicates no learning goals for the class session and/or each lesson activity. ☐ Instructor communicates inappropriate or unrealistic learning goals for the class session and/or each lesson activity.	☐ Instructor clearly identifies realistic learning goals for the class session.	☐ Instructor clearly connects the learning goals for the class session to the course learning objectives.	☐ Instructor clearly identifies the learning goals for each instructional activity, and connects them to the course learning objectives[2].

---

[1] Assignments intended to help students evaluate their mastery of a skill or learning objective and provide information to the instructor on student progress.

[2] See the CET resource A Clear Guide to Writing Learning Objectives.

Time management 5c, 5d*	☐ Instructor technology issues, including software, sound, camera, lighting, and background, occur during class that could have been addressed before the start of class.	☐ The class session starts and ends on time. ☐ Planned sections of the class session are well-timed. ☐ Little or no time spent on non-instructional activities. ☐ Instructor prepares relevant technology before the start of class.	☐ Instructor utilizes and references educational technology for passive learning activities[3] outside of class to support effective use of in-class time.	☐ Instructor maximizes in-class time, using active learning or applications[4] rather than passive learning. ☐ Instructor clearly indicates time limits for all student activities.

Comments:

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Classroom climate 1b, 1c, 2e, 2f, 3a, 4e*	☐ Instructor raises students' stress or anxiety by using discriminatory, dismissive, or other abusive language. ☐ Instructor minimizes students' struggle with material. ☐ Instructor discourages student input. ☐ Instructor violates confidentiality by publicly revealing students with accommodations.	☐ Instructor consistently uses verbal and body language that is responsive to students' stress or anxiety. ☐ Instructor encourages student participation. ☐ Instructor treats all students equitably. ☐ Instructor is	☐ Instructor has established course behavioral norms that foster a positive and inclusive environment.[5] ☐ Instructor encourages interaction between students.	☐ Instructor uses practices that increase students' motivation and foster a growth mindset.[6]

---

[3] When students receive information from the instructor.

[4] Activities in which students practice course concepts during class.

[5] For examples of such norms, please see the CET resource A Menu of Discussion Norms.

[6] A perspective that abilities can be developed through persistence and effort; failure is a necessary step toward mastery.

	☐ Instructor ignores disruptive student behaviors.	responsive to students' different educational backgrounds and learning needs.		
Presentation form 1a, 1b*	☐ Instructor uses inappropriate or offensive gestures and/or speech. ☐ Instructor displays a negative attitude in tone and/or content. ☐ Instructor does not inform students when sessions are being recorded.	☐ Instructor volume, pace, and diction allow observer to follow the class session. ☐ Instructor utilizes webcam feature.	☐ Instructor incorporates appropriate eye contact and effective non-verbal communication (e.g., hand gestures). ☐ Instructor avoids distracting mannerisms or speech patterns, such as filler words and nervous habits.	☐ Instructor is engaging, responsive, and constructive in both tone and content of their speech.
Presentation substance 4a, 4d, 3e*	☐ Instructor does not use, or uses inappropriate, visual support for presentation and/or examples/illustrations.	☐ Instructor provides visual support for verbal presentation and uses concrete examples/illustrations to clarify content.	☐ Instructor cites sources for content discussed.	☐ Instructor follows accessibility best practices by verbally describing and/or captioning any images used in presentation.

Comments:

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT

Knowledge of subject 4a*	☐ Instructor does not appear to understand course content.	☐ Instructor's factual statements are consistent with current knowledge in the field. ☐ Instructor correctly answers questions about course-level content.	☐ Instructor answers questions confidently, clearly, and simply.	☐ Instructor ties current content to topics or knowledge from the profession and/or more advanced courses.
Discipline-specific language 1e*	☐ Instructor does not use, or incorrectly uses, discipline-specific and/or academic language.	☐ Instructor uses discipline-specific and academic language.	☐ Instructor explains use of discipline-specific terms.	☐ Instructor facilitates the use of discipline-specific language by students.
Contextual relevance and transferability 3c, 4c*	☐ Instructor teaches content devoid of real-world scenarios and/or examples. ☐ Instructor assumes unrealistic skill level of students in the class.	☐ Instructor provides real-world applications of class session content. ☐ Instructor explicitly builds on prior student knowledge.	☐ Instructor has students provide real-world examples of class content or apply content to real-world scenarios.	☐ Where appropriate, instructor uses examples where their discipline converges with other disciplines in addressing challenges. ☐ Where appropriate, instructor addresses "wicked problems" identified by USC on a local, national, or global level.

Comments:

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Appropriate content or level 1c, 2a, 2b, 3a*	☐ Class content is too easy or difficult for student knowledge level. ☐ Instructor does not encourage higher-order thinking[7].	☐ Class content appropriately challenges students. ☐ Class content promotes mastery of course learning objectives.[8]	☐ Instructor engages students in higher-order thinking skills during class.	☐ Instructor spends the majority of class time leading students in higher-order thinking activities.
Active learning 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 2e, 3d, 4b*	☐ Instructor uses no active-learning[9] exercises. ☐ Instructor has unrealistic expectations for active-learning exercises. ☐ Instructor uses inappropriate or offensive active-learning exercises. Instructor uses active-learning exercises that are not accessible to everyone in the class.	☐ Class contains at least one active-learning exercise to apply course content. ☐ Instructor monitors and manages active-learning exercises.	☐ Instructor uses active-learning exercises after no more than 30 consecutive minutes of lecture. ☐ Instructor is responsive to student engagement[10] and adjusts strategy accordingly. ☐ Instructor facilitates student-led explanations and/or discussions.	☐ Instructor uses active-learning exercises after no more than 15 consecutive minutes of lecture. ☐ Instructor requires students to submit or present in-class work by end of class. ☐ Where appropriate, instructor leverages student use of electronic technology to facilitate active learning.

---

[7] Analysis, critical thinking, evaluation, problem solving, etc.

[8] See the CET resource [Writing Learning Objectives](#).

[9] Activities in which students practice course concepts during class.

[10] Active participation in an activity in which students are practicing course concepts.

Formative assessment/feedback 1b, 2f, 6a, 6b, 6c, 6d*	☐ Instructor violates FERPA by publicly sharing student grades. ☐ Instructor provides non-constructive and/or discouraging feedback. ☐ Instructor compares student work to an ambiguous or unrealistic standard.	☐ Instructor provides students constructive and encouraging feedback on how to improve their comprehension or performance in class.	☐ Instructor provides information to students about their performance on class activities compared to a pre-established standard.	☐ Instructor leads students in structured reflection on class learning activities.
Comments:				

Classroom Teaching Observation Checklist

CONTEXT Record pertinent characteristics of the course, student population, and physical environment. Examples: enrollment, student demographics, course LMS, class meeting time, and general education status.	Context:

Lecturer/Unit Coordinator : _____ Observer: _____   Date of observation: /   /   or
Date interval: /   /   -   /   /_____ Unit: _____

[This observation is limited to interactions between the teaching staff member(s) and the student group using online communications tools – Discussion board, Chat, and/or Email.]

Note: The consent of all students will be required before communication can be monitored by the reviewer.

Area of focus	Aspects done well	Aspects that could be improved upon	Suggested action(s)
Overall management/leadership of online discussion • Structure/framework provided (along topic/functional lines) • Time management (opening, closure) • Group management (public, private, assignment of roles within groups etc.)			

Moderation of discussion • Questioning • Responding • Promoting participation • Intervention practice (including timeliness) • 'closure'			
Rapport/engagement with students (Language; tone; inter-personal)			

UNIVERSITY *of* TASMANIA

GUIDE TO PEER REVIEW OF TEACHING

Use of this specific tool is not required by USC administration; it is intended as an example of best practices. Schools and departments may choose to create their own tool, edit this tool in any way that makes it a better fit, or use this tool as it is.

CET Asynchronous Online Classroom Teaching Observation Checklist

The CET Asynchronous Online Teaching Observation Checklist provides performance descriptions for four tiers of online instructional practices. The first, second, and third tiers include a progression of recommended teaching practices. The substandard tier includes items that are contrary to best practices and/or USC policies. The checklist can be used for two purposes. It can be used as a developmental tool to provide faculty formative feedback to enhance their teaching, showing progression over multiple observations. It can also be used as an evaluative tool to document evidence of teaching performance for promotion, tenure, or continuing appointment.

This checklist was developed to include recommended practices that can be implemented within a wide variety of teaching models, both traditional and innovative; it is editable so that schools may add or delete items to customize it to their needs. Checklist items are observable actions and behaviors of the instructor (observable during a single visited class session), not the behaviors of students.

Schools could determine how many criteria in each tier should be met in order to qualify for the various levels of advancement in the school. For example, a school could decide that for promotion from assistant to associate professor a faculty member should have none of the items checked in the Substandard Tier and all of the items checked in Tier 1.

Not Included in the Asynchronous Online Classroom Teaching Observation Checklist

- Evaluation of course design, which is addressed in a separate [Asynchronous Online Course Design Syllabus Review Checklist](#).

- Aspects of teaching that cannot be observed in the online environment.

- Best practices that are specific to certain fields, class types or instructional styles.

Recommended Observer Characteristics

- Requests access to the course to be observed.

- Observes a minimum of one completed online module/unit (one that students have completed and for which the instructor has provided feedback). Observation of two separate completed online module/units is recommended.

- Is familiar with the course learning objectives listed in the syllabus.

- Understands the content of the course well enough to evaluate effectiveness of instruction in that topic.

- Has been trained by CET or by a CET Faculty Fellow to use the checklist.

Instructions for Use

- Mark as present all checklist items observed during the class.

Each dimension in the checklist measures one or more criteria in [USC's Definition of Excellence in Teaching](#) and those criteria are noted next to the dimension name. The practices in Tiers 1, 2, and 3 are supported through training provided by CET's faculty institutes.

13

DIMENSION	SUBSTANDARD TIER	TIER 1	TIER 2	TIER 3
*USC Definition of Excellence in Teaching criteria measured by each dimension are noted.	Performing Below Minimum USC Teaching Policy Standard	Performing at Minimum USC Teaching Policy Standard	Performing at Proficient Level of Teaching Standard at USC	Performing at Excellence Level of Teaching Standard at USC
CLASS ORGANIZATION				
Instructional plan 5a, 5b*	☐ Instructor changes the established module/unit instructional plan without prior notification to students.	☐ The module/unit instructional plan demonstrates clear signs of planning and organization, and follows a logical flow. ☐ Module/unit instructional plan includes due dates and assignment descriptions.	☐ The class session includes student interaction with peers, content, and instructor.	☐ The module/unit instructional plan includes instruction, formative assessment,[1] and reflection components. ☐ Each assignment description has an accompanying rubric.
Communication of clear learning goals for the module/unit 6a*	☐ Instructor communicates no learning goals for the module/unit. ☐ Instructor communicates inappropriate or unrealistic learning goals for the module/unit.	☐ Instructor clearly identifies realistic learning goals for the module/unit.	☐ Instructor clearly connects the learning goals for the module/unit to the course learning objectives.	☐ Instructor clearly identifies the learning goals for the module/unit, and connects them to the course learning objectives[2].

---

[1] Formative assessments are conducted throughout the learning process as low-stakes, practice assessments. They determine how students are progressing to mastery of the course learning objectives.

[2] See the CET resource A Clear Guide to Writing Learning Objectives.

Course Environment and Technology 5c, 5d*	☐ Instructor does not select suitable technologies for activities, communication and/or assessment. ☐ Instructor does not conduct learning activities which promote the achievement of the stated learning objectives.	❏ Course tools are used that allow the student to complete the required activity.	☐ Course tools promote learner engagement.	☐ Instructor selects appropriate and varied course tools for activities, communication and assessments.

Comments:

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT				
Course climate 1b, 1c, 2e, 2f, 3a, 4e*	❏ Instructor displays a negative attitude in tone and/or content. ☐ Instructor minimizes students' struggle with material. ☐ Instructor discourages student input. ☐ Instructor violates confidentiality by publicly revealing students with accommodations. ☐ Instructor ignores disruptive student behaviors.	☐ Instructor consistently uses written language that is responsive to students' stress or anxiety. ☐ Instructor encourages student participation. ☐ Instructor treats all students equitably. ☐ Instructor is responsive to students' different educational backgrounds and learning needs.	☐ Instructor has established course norms that foster a positive and inclusive environment.[3] ☐ Instructor encourages interaction between students.	☐ Instructor uses practices that increase students' motivation and foster a growth mindset.[4]

---

[3] For examples of such norms, please see the CET resource A Menu of Discussion Norms.

[4] A perspective that abilities can be developed through persistence and effort; failure is a necessary step toward mastery.

Communication 1a, 1b*	☐ Instructor uses inappropriate, offensive, or unprofessional communication.	☐ Instructor provides clear and complete instructions for all assignments and activities.	☐ Instructor participates in and manages communication.	☐ Instructor frequently provides communication that promotes the stated learning objectives.
Content 4a, 4d, 3e*	☐ Instructor does not use, or uses inappropriate, visual and written support for content and/or examples/illustrations.	☐ Instructor provides a variety of multimedia content. ☐ Instructor uses concrete examples/illustrations to clarify content.	☐ Instructor cites sources for content.	☐ Instructor provides transcripts and/or captions for all auditory media, including both audio and video resources.
Comments:				

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT

Knowledge of subject 4a*	☐ Instructor makes factual errors with respect to course content.	☐ Instructor's factual statements are consistent with current knowledge in the field. ☐ Instructor correctly answers questions about course-level content.	☐ Instructor answers questions confidently, clearly, and simply.	☐ Instructor ties current content to topics or knowledge from the profession and/or more advanced courses.
Discipline-specific language 1e*	☐ Instructor does not use, or incorrectly uses, discipline-specific and/or academic language.	☐ Instructor uses discipline-specific and academic language.	☐ Instructor explains use of discipline-specific terms.	☐ Instructor facilitates the use of discipline-specific language by students.

Contextual relevance and transferability 3c, 4c*	☐ Instructor teaches content devoid of real-world scenarios and/or examples. ☐ Instructor assumes unrealistic skill level of students in the class.	☐ Instructor provides real-world applications of module/unit content. ☐ Instructor explicitly builds on prior student knowledge.	☐ Instructor has students provide real-world examples of class content or apply content to real-world scenarios.	☐ Where appropriate, instructor uses examples where their discipline converges with other disciplines in addressing challenges. ☐ Where appropriate, instructor addresses "wicked problems" identified by USC on a local, national, or global level.
Comments:				

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT				
Appropriate content or level 1c, 2a, 2b, 3a*	☐ Module/unit content is too easy or difficult for student knowledge level. ☐ Instructor does not encourage higher-order thinking[5].	☐ Module/unit content appropriately challenges students. ☐ Module/unit content promotes mastery of course learning objectives.[6]	☐ Instructor engages students in higher-order thinking skills during in the module/unit.	☐ A majority of the module/unit's activities engage higher-order thinking.

---

[5] Analysis, critical thinking, evaluation, problem solving, etc.

[6] See the CET resource Writing Learning Objectives.

Active learning 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 2e, 3d, 4b*	☐ Instructor uses no active-learning[7] exercises. ☐ Instructor has unrealistic expectations for active-learning exercises. ☐ Instructor uses inappropriate or offensive active-learning exercises. ☐ Instructor uses active-learning exercises that are not accessible to everyone in the class.	☐ Module/unit contains at least one active-learning exercise to apply course content, resulting in a graded student work product.	☐ Instructor facilitates student-led explanations and/or discussions.	❏ Where appropriate, instructor leverages student use of electronic technology to facilitate active learning.
Formative assessment[8]/feedback 1b, 2f, 6a, 6b, 6c, 6d*	☐ Instructor violates FERPA by publicly sharing student grades. ☐ Instructor provides non-constructive and/or discouraging feedback. ☐ Instructor compares student work to an ambiguous or unrealistic standard.	☐ Instructor provides students constructive and encouraging feedback on how to improve their comprehension or performance.	☐ Instructor provides information to students about their performance on module/unit activities compared to a pre-established standard.	☐ Instructor leads students in structured reflection on learning activities.
Comments:				

---

[7] Activities in which students practice course concepts during class.

[8] Formative assessments are conducted throughout the learning process as low-stakes, practice assessments. They determine how students are progressing to mastery of the course learning objectives.

Classroom Teaching Observation Checklist

| CONTEXT
Record pertinent characteristics of the course, student population, and physical environment. Examples: enrollment, student demographics, course LMS, and general education status.	Context:

Grand Valley State University - Online/Hybrid Course Peer Review Rubric

Course: Instructor: Semester:

Peer Reviewer(s):   Date(s) of Observation:

Delivery Format: ☐ Online   ☐ Hybrid

RUBRIC KEY: E = Excellent | G = Good | F = Fair | P = Poor | N = Not Observed

Note: Please use "N" = Not Observed, if you are reviewing a course early in the semester and you are unable find an item below.

I. Overall Course Design and Organization[1]	E	G	F	P	N	Comments/Suggestions
The course website is organized, easy to navigate, provides clear instructions and student guidance. Examples of Evidence (Where to Look): • There are on-going faculty announcements that provide personal connection with students and instructions for getting started, course requirements, and where to access course materials. (e.g., Course Announcements) • A course orientation or tour is available for students. (e.g., Course Announcements or Content Area) • The course menu is clear, organized and simple. (e.g., Course Navigation Menu) • Course content follows accessibility guidelines (per ADA)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

II. Course Expectations	E	G	F	P	N	Comments/Suggestions
The course website includes a course description, clear measurable learning objectives, required textbook and/or course materials, schedule, grading, and assessment requirements. In addition, university policies and procedures along with student support services are included (tutoring, disability support resources, library, IT HelpDesk, etc.). Information is provided regarding expected time on task. Examples of Evidence (Where to Look): • Course description is included. (e.g., Syllabus or Content Area) • Learning objectives for both course and learning activities are included. (e.g., Syllabus or Content Area) • Required textbook or other course materials are clearly identified. (e.g., Syllabus or Content Area) • Grading policies, rubrics, due dates, etc. are identified for all graded learning activities or assessments. (e.g., Syllabus or Content Area) • Specific technology requirements are included. (e.g., Syllabus or Content Area) • Student participation expectations are provided for all activities and course communications. (e.g., Syllabus or Content Area). Clearly communicated course schedule/outline with due dates, frequency and duration of assignments, course calendar, etc. (e.g., Syllabus, Content Area, Assignments) • Estimated of amounts of time to spend on learning activities is clearly stated (e.g., Syllabus, Content Area, Assignments, Announcements)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

III. Faculty/Student Interaction[2]	E	G	F	P	N	Comments/Suggestions
The faculty's online presence is demonstrated through frequent and timely faculty-student communication and contact. Examples of Evidence (Where to Look): • Welcome announcement (e.g., Announcements) • Regular, timely course engagement, faculty feedback, and communication. (e.g., Announcements, Email, Discussion Board, Live Chat) • Discussion board participation (e.g., Discussion Board) • Faculty is available to students (e.g., Online Office Hours, Discussion Board, Live Chat, Email) • Establish and maintain a positive online climate and course tone (e.g., Discussion Board, Announcements)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

IV. Reciprocity and Cooperation Among Students[2]	E	G	F	P	N	Comments/Suggestions
Students engage in formal and/or informal discussions of course topics, group assignments, etc. Examples of Evidence (Where to Look): • Student introductions (e.g., Discussion Board) • Group assignments (e.g., Content Area and Grade Center) • Group discussions (e.g., Discussion Board) • Faculty models and facilitates students' discussion participation (e.g., Discussion Board)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

V. Active Learning[2]	E	G	F	P	N	Comments/Suggestions
Active learning methods engage students in the learning process by encouraging them to discover, process, and apply information in a variety of ways. Inclusive of students' diversity, talents, and ways of knowing. Examples of Evidence (Where to Look): • Varied student activities and assignments (e.g., Syllabus, Discussion Board, Assignments/Assessments, Content Area) • Active use of writing, speaking, presentation (e.g., Assignments, Discussion Board) • Student engagement in collaborative learning activities (e.g., Assignments, Course Content, Discussion Board) • Provide alternative assignment options or student choice (e.g., Syllabus, Assignments) • Supplemental online learning materials (e.g., Content Area) • Timely, corrective feedback for online activities (e.g., Discussion Board, Grade Center) • Accommodations and support resources provided for students with disabilities (e.g., Syllabus, Course Content, Technology)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

VI. Prompt Feedback[2]	E	G	F	P	N	Comments/Suggestions
Faculty assist students in frequently assessing their knowledge and competence while providing them with opportunities to practice, receive suggestions, and reflect on their learning. Examples of Evidence (Where to Look): • Faculty participation expectations are provided for all activities and course communications. (e.g., Syllabus or Content Area) • Meaningful feedback is clear, positive, specific and focused on learning objectives (e.g., Grade Center, Discussion Board) • Assignments and activities are clearly communicated (e.g., Syllabus, Content Area, Assignments) • Opportunity for draft or practice assignments (e.g., Content Area, Assignments)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

VII. High Expectations[2]	E	G	F	P	N	Comments/Suggestions
Faculty clearly communicate high, rigorous, appropriate expectations and provide support to students in meeting the expectations. Examples of Evidence (Where to Look): • Explicit communication of knowledge and skills required for the course (e.g., Syllabus) • Explanation and reminders of learning objectives for each week, assignment, etc. (e.g., Syllabus, Course Content, Assignments) • Context and rationale for assignments to motivate students (e.g., Announcements, Assignments, Course Content) • Examples and counterexamples of high quality work (e.g., Course Content, Assignments) • Assignments and learning activities elicit critical thinking (e.g., Discussion Board, Assignments, Course Content) • Appropriate amount of assigned work (e.g., Syllabus, Course Content, Assignments)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

Additional Comments:

Organization and Structure	Learning Design	Accessibility & Course Technology Tools	Instructor Presence	Feedback and Assessment
Instructor provides a structured course timeline.	Course provides a variety of activities to develop problem solving skills and/or relevance to real world application.	Videos have closed captions and audio files have transcripts.	Instructor provides personalized welcome and introduction to the course.	Course grading policies, including consequences of late submissions, are clearly stated in the course information area or syllabus.
Course shell is well-organized and easy to navigate.	Course provides more than one modality (visual, textual, kinesthetic and/or auditory) within activities and materials that enhance student engagement.	All course materials (PDF, Word, Power Point, etc.) are ADA compliant.	Instructor contact information is clearly stated and easily accessible.	Course includes formative and summative (low and high stakes) methods to assess students' learning.
An overview of weekly and/or module learning objectives, tasks and learning materials is presented.	Course offers opportunities for interaction and collaboration for student/student, student/instructor and/or student/content.	Necessary skills for required technology tools (websites, software, and hardware) are clearly stated and supported with resources.	Instructor presence is evident in every week/module.	Criteria for the assessment of a graded assignment are clearly articulated (rubrics, examples of work, etc.).
NSC-provided syllabus and course templates are present and not deleted.				Students have an opportunity to assess their learning (pre-test, automated self-tests, reflective assignments, etc.).
All external links work properly in the LMS (check using Canvas Course Link Validator).				Course learning outcomes are clearly defined and at least one objective is linked to a key assessment
Course shell is free of typographical errors.				

Online Quality Assurance Handbook

Organization & Structure

	Annotation
Instructor provides a structured course timeline.	A course timeline gives adult learners a way to visualize the sequence of course modules and types of learning activities and assignments that assists the adult learner in scheduling time efficiently.
Course shell is well- organized and easy to navigate. Synchronous Tools: Conferences, Zoom, Teams, Cranium Classroom, etc. Asynchronous Tools: Yuja Videos You Tube Videos Assignments Diagrams	Instructions provide a general course overview, present the schedule of activities, guide the learner to explore the course site, and indicate what to do first, in addition to listing detailed navigational instructions for the whole course. Instructors may choose to incorporate some of this information in the course syllabus. In this case, learners should be directed to the syllabus at the beginning of the course. A useful feature is a "Read Me First" or "Start Here" button or icon on the course home page, linking learners to start-up information. Examples: 1. A course "tour" 2. Clear statements about how to get started in the course 3. A "scavenger hunt" or "syllabus quiz" assignment that leads learners through an exploration of the different parts of the course 4. A table or diagram that depicts the relationship between the online and face-to-face portions of a blended course
An overview of weekly and/or module learning objectives, tasks and learning materials is presented. Synchronous Tools: Conferences, Zoom, Teams, Cranium Classroom, etc. Asynchronous Tools: Yuja Videos You Tube Videos	Adult learners benefit from knowing what they are about to learn, as well as the scope of work and time commitment expected from them. Providing a course overview will help prepare learners for what, when, where, and why they will be learning, as well as what content, interactions, and assessments will take place within the week/module. These "advance organizers" help learners plan around conflicting priorities (school,

Readings Assignments Activities	family, work) and better manage their time. The week/module overview page should include at least a short introduction to the module topic and indicate what materials need to be reviewed and what activities and assignments need to be completed. Due dates should be included for every assignment and activity in the module. This will help your learners stay on track. Examples: - Week/Module Introduction/Expectations - Week/Module Objectives & Goals - Readings & Videos - Activities - Assignments
NSC-provided syllabus and course templates are present and not deleted.	The syllabus and course templates contain the most current information on NSC policies; Core Learning Outcomes; Netiquette; plagiarism; where to find technical support, Student Services, and Disabilities resources; and other useful information and resources to which students need to have access. The course name and number, as well as Instructor contact information are included on the landing page. The templates provide avenues for communication and easy access to support and guidance.
Course shell is free of typographical errors.	
All external links work properly in the LMS (check using Canvas Course Link Validator).	Broken links to websites and other types of external content frustrate students. All links should function properly.

Learning Design

	Annotation
Course provides a variety of activities to develop higher order thinking, problem solving skills, or relevance to real world application. Synchronous Tools: Conferences, Zoom, Teams, Cranium Classroom, etc. Groups Assigned in Canvas	When the learner thinks critically he or she goes through the process of constructing knowledge, inquiring, exploring, and thinking. Cognitive presence relies on critical thinking skills and active learning, as well as helping learners to link existing ideas to the creation of new knowledge. With measurable objectives guiding the pathway to higher-order thinking skills,

Collaborative Documents Discussions Asynchronous Tools: Yuja Videos You Tube Videos Assignments Diagrams Peer Reviews Discussions/Forums Quizzes/Surveys/Tests	Bloom's Taxonomy can provide a framework for exploring different levels of thinking and associated skills and competencies. When adult learners can apply a learning activity to practical value beyond the course, relevance is established between the stated learning objective, the learning activity, and the assessment of that activity. Experiential learning, case studies, and problem- based activities are designed to immerse learners in real world scenarios, with the goal of having learners build on their existing knowledge and skills to analyze specific problems and find solutions. Transparency of learning activities should also be followed. Ensure that learning objectives are clearly stated for learning activities. Examples: 1. Include reflection as part of project assignments. 2. Create peer review groups to encourage learners to learn from each other and help each other construct new knowledge. 3. Create scenario-based discussion forums in which learners can interact. 4. Have learners create and facilitate course-related scenarios. 5. Have learners document their real-world experiences through digital storytelling. 6. Assign "offline" activities to learners and have the learners "debrief" in the online environment.
Course provides more than one modality (visual, textual, kinesthetic and/or auditory) within activities and materials that enhance student engagement.	Multimodal learning environments allow instructional elements to be presented in more than one sensory mode (visual, aural, written). Materials that are presented in a variety of presentation modes may lead learners to perceive that it is easier to learn and improve attention, thus leading to improved learning performance; in particular for lower- achieving students (Chen & Fu, 2003; Moreno & Mayer, 2007; Zywno 2003). Examples: Images

	- Video/Audio/Podcast clips - Mnemonics - Simulations/ Online Labs - Drag and Drop Checks - Concept Maps - Discussions

Course offers opportunities for interaction and collaboration for student/student, student/instructor and/or student/content.
 	
Synchronous Tools:
Conferences, Zoom, Teams, Cranium Classroom, etc.
Groups Assigned in Canvas
Discussions
 	
Asynchronous Tools:
Announcements
Yuja Videos
You Tube Videos
Assignments
Diagrams
Peer Reviews
Discussions
Quizzes/Surveys/Tests
Quick Checks
	Collaboration in an online course fosters constructive learning by enabling learners to be active participants, take initiative, think critically, and engage each other in dialogue. (Palloff & Prat, 2007). By requiring learners to engage with each other, the design of such activities requires them to assume more responsibility for their own learning which often leads to a deeper level of engagement. Providing opportunities for learners to learn from each other is an integral part of constructive collaboration. Collaborative exercises can enable more advanced learners to help less experienced learners to maximize their abilities, and help construct new knowledge together (Vygotsky, 1978).
	
	Examples:
	1. Student↔student interaction-based activities include:
	   - group projects
	   - group case studies
	   - peer instruction
	   - synchronous or asynchronous discussions or debates
	   - collaborative brainstorming
	   - peer review of selected work
	2. Student↔Instructor interaction include:
	   - providing feedback on assignments, learning journals, or other reflective activities
	   - participating in discussion forums or chats
	   - sending frequent announcements to summarize the previous week or describe the next week
	3. Student↔Content interaction include:

	• tutorials • quizzes (if the feedback is useful and usable) • web quests • reading/video discussion or reflections • simulations

Accessibility / Course Technology Tools

	Annotations
Videos have closed captions and audio files have transcripts.	In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) all videos must be word-for-word closed captioned that is in standard sentence format, punctuation, and capitalization. Closed captioning benefits not only hearing impaired learners, but ELS and other learners viewing video content in a quiet location such as a library. Only audio files should have transcripts.
All course materials (PDF, Word, PowerPoint, etc.) are ADA compliant.	Screen readers convert course text to speech so that learners can listen to the course content. Screen readers insert pauses for periods, semicolons, commas, question marks, exclamation points, and ends of paragraphs. Providing content that is accessible is critical to keep learners with visual disabilities on track. Screen readers, which make documents, etc., accessible to learners with visual impairments who rely on those readers, cannot read PDFs of book chapters or articles that have been scanned landscape style. Therefore, all PDF documents must be portrait style (8.5 x 11). All Word documents and those saved as PDF documents, and all content typed directly into a Canvas course must have titles, headers, and sub headers designated as Header 1, Header 2, etc. All numbered and bullet lists must be designated as numbered and bullet lists. Tables should include designated headers and are captioned. All links to external pages or documents should use the title of the link or document as the link. Do not list "click here" or "link" for the link indicator. Only text that serves as a link should be

	underlined as screen readers read all underlined words as a link. If images are used, ALT (alternative) text, descriptive text needs to be provided. For some images, alternative text is enough. If a complex photograph, chart, or diagram is displayed, visually impaired learners need more descriptive text, including a narrative that explains clearly what the image is and what it represents. Closed captioning (above) also applies to PowerPoints with voiceovers.
Necessary skills for required technology tools (websites, software, and hardware) are clearly stated and supported with resources.	Technology problems and ambiguous instructions frustrate online learners. Access issues need to be mitigated early on in order for learners to succeed. Any hardware, software, or technology applications that are required for successful participation in the course need to be introduced along with resources that support a full range of learner mastery. This information needs to be communicated out to learners early on and reinforced throughout the term. Additionally, if learners are required to use third party content (publisher websites, online labs, assignment utilities, web-based subscriptions, etc.) links to associated resources and explanations on how to access this content need to be included. Technology requirements are part of the course shell template. Do not delete it.

Instructor Presence

	Annotation
Instructor provides personalized welcome and introduction to the course. Synchronous Tools: Conferences, Zoom, Teams, Cranium Classroom or Cafe, etc. Discussions Asynchronous Tools: Announcements Yuja Videos You Tube Videos	By welcoming learners to the course and providing context for what they will be learning, the instructor sets a tone for success from the start of the course. The course welcome should establish instructor presence and provide enough guidance to ensure that learners will get off to a good start in the online space. In essence, this is the learners' first impression of the instructor and the course. Examples:

Assignments Diagrams Peer Reviews Discussions Quizzes/Surveys/Tests Quick Checks	1. Create a course introduction video introducing learners to the course topic and learning content. Add your insight and expertise by contextualizing the learning activities alongside course and module learning objectives. 2. Create a course introduction video that highlights your achievements in the field and relate that knowledge and experience back to what the learners will learn in the course. 3. Create a course introduction tour via video, audio, or illustrated document that welcomes learners to your online course and explains how and where to get started. 4. Hold virtual office hours via Conferences or Cranium Cafe.
Instructor contact information is clearly stated and easily accessible.	In addition to providing this information in the syllabus, include contact information on the template landing (Home) page. Be sure that there is a printable version of the syllabus with instructor contact information for learners to have on hand in case they are unable to access the online class and need to get in touch. Opening avenues for communication and providing easy access to those channels support learner- instructor interactions and facilitate engaging in supportive contact and interaction, a key component of social presence.
Instructor presence is evident in every week/module. Synchronous Tools: Conferences, Zoom, Teams, Cranium Classroom or Cafe, etc. Groups Assigned in Canvas Discussions Asynchronous Tools: Announcements Yuja Videos You Tube Videos Assignments Diagrams Peer Reviews	Adult learners need assurances throughout the semester that there really is an instructor on the other end of the online course. Additionally, maintaining a strong instructor presence in every week/module nurtures a sense of connection between learners and the instructor and builds community and trust. Examples: 1. Make short videos of one or two key concepts for the week/module. 2. Include a video or podcast on your week/module overview page, that goes into more detail about activities and assignments for that week/module.

Discussions Quizzes/Surveys/Tests Quick Checks	3. Provide feedback comments on rubrics used for grading. 4. Post regular announcements (these can be set for delayed posting). 5. Provide five-minute feedback videos as part of grading feedback. 6. Include discussion wrap-ups at the end of select weeks/modules. 7. Hold synchronous virtual office hours. 8. Hold synchronous Conferences with learners. 9. Make 15-minute mini-lectures and embed them in the modules.

Feedback and Assessment

	Annotation
Course grading policies, including consequences of late submissions, are clearly stated in the course information area and/or syllabus.	Learners need to know how their work will be assessed in a clear and transparent manner. Grading policies can guide learner progress, and promote fair and objective review and assessment of all graded work. Research shows that grading policies directly impact learner motivation. Including clear course grading policies in the syllabus or course information documents area will also mitigate issues related to learner complaints about grades that they have received on assigned work.
Course includes formative and summative (low and high stakes) methods to assess students' learning. Synchronous Tools: Conferences, Zoom, Teams, Cranium Classroom, etc. Groups Assigned in Canvas Discussions Exit Tickets Asynchronous Tools: Announcements Yuja Videos You Tube Videos Assignments Diagrams Peer Reviews Discussions Quizzes/Surveys/Tests	Consistent and regular assessments help learners demonstrate their progress and deficiencies. As learners move through an online course, they should encounter regular assignments, activities, and interactions designed to assess how well they have mastered the learning content, and how close they are to meeting program, course, or module learning objectives. Examples: Low stakes- • Mastery learning quizzes (required to reach a minimum score) • Pre-tests/Self-checks • Participation • Muddiest Point High stakes- • Research Papers/Essays Exams

Pre-tests Quick Checks	• Problem Sets
Criteria for the assessment of a graded assignment are clearly articulated (rubrics, examples of work, etc.).	Elikai & Schuhmann (2010) found that grading policies, examples of work, and associated rubrics motivated learning by associating levels of mastery and performance with a specific grade, and guiding achievement progress. Guidelines or rubrics for the assessment of graded work should include: • performance criteria • setting desired performance/proficiency levels for learners' performance descriptions. This includes detailing out what constitutes a full continuum of accomplishment, from unsatisfactory through to exemplary, and include associated grades along with each level along the continuum.
Students have an opportunity to assess their learning (pre-test, automated self-tests, reflective assignments, etc.).	Self-assessment plays a role in learner self-efficacy, fosters learners' abilities to construct meaning, and promotes metacognition. By asking learners to check their skill mastery levels or reflect on their own work, they learn to examine their own reasoning and decision making process (Cukusic et al, 2014). Examples: • Reflecting on personal goals statements • End of module quizzes with required performance levels • Evaluating own participation • Using a rubric to analyze one's work
Course learning outcomes are clearly defined and at least one objective is linked to a key assessment (e.g., Core Curriculum Learning Outcomes, Program and/or Course Learning Outcomes)	The syllabus and or modules should contain learning outcomes that are connected to program or school outcomes based upon relevant content. Examples: • SOE-Key Assessment • Core Curriculum Outcomes (Critical Thinking,

| | • Communication, Citizenship) |
| | • Progression Portfolios |