Overview of Best Practices for Hybrid Course Design

This chart builds upon "Ecampus Essentials for the Hybrid Course Development Pilot Program" to provide more thorough recommendations of best practices for blended course design. Recommendations here are based upon the Quality Matters Rubric.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Standard</th>
<th>Detailed Standards</th>
<th>Why It's Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Course Overview and Introduction (Navigation)         | - Blackboard course site opens to announcement area  
- Menu buttons kept to a minimum, unused buttons deleted  
- Course structured in intuitive chronological sections (weeks, units, etc.), with all materials for each section housed within that section  
- Avoid folders-within-folders and other confusing navigational structures  
- All OSU-required syllabus information is present (instructor’s name, OSU email address, contact information, grading policies, etc.)  
- A course schedule, including due dates and clear designation of all classroom and online activities and assessments, is provided within the syllabus or as a separate document  
- Syllabus also includes netiquette requirements and technical support info  
- Required special curricular instructions are provided for Bacc Core, WIC, and DPD courses | Clear navigation and overview/introductory materials help students find what they need, reducing frustration, and they help students avoid missing important instructions or assignments.                                                                 |
| Learning Objectives                                   | - Course outcomes are measurable and observable (avoiding ambiguous verbs such as “understand,” or “comprehend”)  
- Course outcomes are equivalent to fully classroom-based offerings of the same course  
- Weekly learning objectives and/or a weekly introduction is provided | Learning outcomes are the road map for the course. Clear outcomes tell us exactly what should be covered and at which depth.                                                                                           |
| Assessment and Measurement                            | - Grading policies are stated clearly (such as stating grading criteria or supplying a rubric)  
- Assessments (assignments, exams, projects, discussions, etc.) are aligned with course outcomes in content and cognitive level  
- All online assessments are collected within Blackboard. | Clear expectations help students succeed. Assessments should be aligned with outcomes to ensure that outcomes are being met. Collection within Blackboard is important for record-keeping and financial aid purposes. |
| Instructional Materials                               | - Instructional materials are in alignment with the course outcomes  
- Instructional materials are appropriately cited  
- Copyright permissions for any borrowed images, textual content, film, or other source materials have been requested; in cases where permissions | Instructional materials should prepare students for assessments.  
Copyright laws must be followed.                                                                                               |
are denied or when fees are not feasible, the source materials in question are removed
- Instructional materials are presented in formats demonstrating best practices for hybrid education
  - Online content includes multiple modes of delivery (for example, text, images, audio, visual)
  - Any online lecture content is brief (<20 minutes per lecture) and is designed for online delivery (e.g., not simply recording of classroom lectures)
  - Audio and visual quality must be clear for all multimedia
  - Online lectures are not required; it is fine to use existing materials such as links to open education resources, readings, and activities

Research shows that adherence to best practices for presenting instructional materials helps students learn more effectively. Online materials used in hybrid courses should be created to make best use of the online learning environment to meet course learning outcomes, rather than to attempt to duplicate classroom content.

| Learner Interaction and Engagement | • Learning activities are aligned with course outcomes  
• Opportunities for active learning are provided  
• The instructor's response times for communications and grading are clearly stated  
• Face-to-face and online learning activities are clearly connected and provide mutual reinforcement.  
• Three forms of interaction are present in the course:  
  - Student/content (such as discussion board, readings, videos, research projects)  
  - Student/instructor (such as discussion board, response to assignments, inclusion of a general discussion forum the instructor will facilitate)  
  - Student/student (such as discussion board, group projects, peer reviewed assignments, blogs) |
| --- | --- |
|  | Research shows that active learning opportunities, as well as the three forms of interaction, are effective in hybrid classes and for adult students.  
Response times help create a structure of interaction. |

| Course Technology | • Appropriate tools are used for their intended purpose (assignment tool for homework, exam tool for exams, rather than having students email assignments, for example)  
• Tools outside of Bb are used in ways that comply with FERPA regulations and student completion of work is logged within Bb  
• Grades are communicated to students using the Bb grading center  
• Hidden and duplicate columns are deleted from the grade center  
• Links to outside resources are functional |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FERPA adherence is required by law. Tracking student participation and progress within Blackboard helps us keep records and helps the financial aid office determine eligibility.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learner Support</th>
<th>• Library course guides are used, when appropriate to the course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learners benefit from library support on course assignments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Accessibility | • Menu buttons are used (not links); simple color scheme  
• Visuals, such as graphics in online lectures, contain sufficient contrast from background color to foreground text  
• Documents are posted in accessible format (such as a PDF file with document structure tags) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Providing accessible content is required by law.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>