



MAGNA ONLINE SEMINARS

Supplemental Materials

Customized Course Review Rubrics: How to Take the Quality of Your Online Courses to the Next Level

Presented by:
Brian Udermann

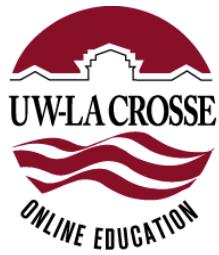
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UW-La Crosse Online Course Evaluation Guidelines

The *UW-L Online Course Evaluation Guidelines* are intended to help instructors create and teach well-designed online courses. The *Guidelines* outline specific features of online courses and recommend ways to design, deliver and improve courses. Part 1 is *Background Information* that identifies key features of courses, describes their purposes and gives suggestions on how to implement each one in a course. Not all *Guidelines* will apply in every course. Part 2 is a *Checklist* you can use as a reference as you design, teach or review an online course.

The *Guidelines* may be used as a tool:

- for self-assessment by instructors during the design and delivery of their online courses.
- to provide constructive feedback to instructors on the design and delivery of their online courses.
- in the *UW-L Online Course Development Funding* process to document that an online course has been fully developed.
- in the *UW-L Online Instructor Training* to help participants identify the features of effective online course design.

Whether the *Guidelines* are used for self-assessment or to give feedback to an instructor, use the checklist to identify the course features that have been included, excluded or need improvement, and supplement the checklist with written annotations and suggestions.

Part 1: Background Information

Design and Development			
#	Guideline	Purpose	Suggestions
1	Information about being an online learner.	To provide students with information related to online learning as well as tips and strategies for being successful in an online course.	Offer general information related to online learning (<i>e.g.</i> , time management skills, expected hours required for course, deadline awareness). You might provide a self-assessment of student readiness, which would give students an opportunity to practice the technology/online tools before being evaluated.
2	A comprehensive syllabus.	To provide students with all the information they need to be successful in the course in one location.	A comprehensive syllabus may include the following: course description, instructor contact information, course prerequisites, explanation of any face-to-face or synchronous requirements, course objectives, textbook and other instructional materials, credit hours, schedule with content coverage and due dates, grading policy, grade scale/weights,





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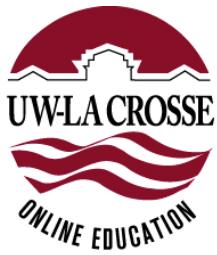
			any special technical requirements beyond D2L , code of conduct, netiquette, instructor expectations regarding discussion activities, feedback, late policies, extra credit, tech support resources, ADA/DRS statement, time required for the class, and preferred communication method.
3	A list of university academic resources with links to appropriate websites.	To make it easier for students to access the academic support services they may need to be successful in the class.	Provide links to university units such as the library, tutoring center, counseling and testing, records and registration, the writing center, multicultural student services, disability resource services, career support services, <i>etc.</i> These are listed in the syllabus template .
4	A welcome message with instructions on how to get started.	To clarify what students need to do when they first log in and begin the class; to facilitate student familiarity with D2L, student participation expectations, the syllabus, and course requirements.	Create a welcome message in the “News Item” area in D2L. Give students directions on where to find the syllabus and step-by-step information about how to get started in the class. You might create a screencast/video orienting students to the class that includes directions on how to get started.
5	A consistent navigation structure.	To make it easier for students to navigate the course, know where things are located, stay on track with deadlines, <i>etc.</i>	All units/modules should be created in a consistent manner with the same layout, content areas and activity types, structure, <i>etc.</i> QuickLinks should be used to easily link to outside websites or areas in D2L (<i>e.g.</i> , discussions, quizzes).
6	Student-to-student interaction.	To help students get to know each other and develop a sense of community while collaboratively learning about the course content.	Some ways to design student-to-student interaction and build community in your course include creating content-specific discussions, using groups in the class, having students provide peer feedback, <i>etc.</i>
7	Student-to-instructor interaction.	To facilitate student and instructor interaction in the course and help students know the instructor is available to aid learning in the online environment.	Create an on-going discussion for course related questions and feedback. Develop and describe instructor communication plan for timely responses to questions and email, engagement expectations in discussions, and feedback on activities and assessments. Create a biography to include background and contact information.
8	Course and unit/module learning objectives that are measurable and clearly stated.	To make students aware of how and what they will be expected to learn as a result of the instruction.	Create course and unit/module learning objectives that are measurable, action-oriented, reasonable and time-bound. Here is a handout with information about writing measurable learning objectives . These can be stated in the commentary/lecture narrative, in the module description, stated after each checklist item, in quiz information, dropbox





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			instructions, or discussion prompts.
9	Assessments and activities that are aligned with the learning objectives.	To ensure that what students are doing in the class and being evaluated relate to the learning objectives.	Use a matrix or table in your course planning process that shows the alignment of course activities and assessments with the appropriate learning objectives. Clearly state to your students the objectives that are being met with each activity and assessment.
10	Task list for students that detail what they are to do each week/unit/module.	To help students stay on track with course requirements.	Create task lists that include due dates for weekly/unit/module requirements. Include a detailed schedule in your course syllabus.
11	An introductory or icebreaker discussion activity.	To help students get to know each other and you as the instructor; to establish a sense of community from the beginning of the course.	This could be an icebreaker or introduction forum in the discussion area. This discussion could be an introductory activity to the student and/or the course material.
12	Separate discussion forums for general course questions, community building, and items related to course content.	To clearly relay the purpose of the various discussion forums and to decrease confusion between community-based discussions and content-based discussions.	Clearly label the discussion forums and topics. To organize your discussions, take advantage of using forums and topics by using forums to contain several similar discussion topics. For example, a discussion forum for community building could be titled “General Discussions” and topics within could be a “raise your hand” area that allows students to ask course-related questions, a “student lounge” area that allows students to socialize, and an “icebreaker” area that generates a welcoming environment at the beginning of the course.
13	Discussion topics that stimulate thought and reflection related to course content.	To facilitate meaningful student engagement with course content and each other.	Open-ended questions tend to generate more dialogue. Ask questions that require students to connect content to life experience and prior knowledge, explore examples, reflect on course concepts and theories, provide rationale for a response, explain process for solving problems, etc. Discussions might ask students to view media and reflect, or to complete activities and then share their reactions. Consider question starters from the six facets of understanding.
14	Clearly articulated group work expectations.	To have group activities completed in a smooth and effective manner with clear expectations of all group members.	If you choose to use groups in your course, inform students how groups will be determined, clearly define tasks and participation expectations, provide clear expectations for any final products or deliverables, and clearly articulate any peer evaluation that will occur and if individual as well as group grades will be given.



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15	Inclusion of instructor impressions and perspectives on course material.	To allow students to experience and understand the instructors perspectives on course content which helps students feel more connected to the instructor and material.	Create course items such as short videos, presentations, course announcements, or written lecture narratives that add your voice, perspective, impressions, examples, research, stories, etc.
16	Varied opportunities for students to interact with content.	To take advantage of multimedia and multiple sources of content to provide broad exposure to the material and help students develop a better understanding of the subject matter.	Present course content using a combination of instructor-created and open resources such as written narratives, text-based presentations, videos, podcasts, websites, presentations with audio, tutorials, journal articles, readings, case studies, etc.
17	Provide support materials for complex course concepts.	To provide students with more than written text or narratives as they are exposed to and learn complex course material.	Provide things like charts, graphs, images, audio files, videos, case studies, tutorials etc. to add to your course when students need assistance to learn complex course concepts. Add examples and stories from your experience as a practitioner/researcher.
18	Design assessments and evaluations to uphold academic integrity.	To deter academic dishonesty in your course.	Here is a tutorial with several ideas.
19	Ongoing, varied and multiple activities and assessments to assess student learning.	To allow students to demonstrate mastery of course material in a variety of ways.	Create a diversified assessment plan executed throughout the length of the course. Use self-assessments, assignments, papers, projects, quizzes, exams, etc. to assess student learning.
20	Detailed instructions and explanations for all assessments.	To provide students with adequate information to complete all coursework which will decrease confusion related to these assessments and facilitate successful student completion of course requirements.	Clearly describe the requirements for all assessments in the course (assignments, papers, quizzes, exams, discussions, group work, etc.). Share any rubrics that will be used to grade course requirements with the students. Explain why different assessments are included in the course. Write detailed directions including information about due dates and time limits, quantity and quality of work, responsibilities, standards, structure, requirements, etc.
21	An organized grades area set up with all	To make it easier to keep student grades up to date and comply with FERPA	Have the grades area fully set up prior to the beginning of the course so students can see all the graded items up front. Use "categories" in the grades area to group like grade items





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	graded activities.	standards.	together (e.g., Quiz 1, 2, and 3 go in the “Quiz” category). Review the FERPA website . Use the grades tool in D2L to ensure grades are distributed within a secure setting.
22	Opportunities for students to give course and content related feedback.	To gather feedback from students to use in continually improving the course.	Design methods to gather student feedback about the ease of navigation in the class, instructor involvement and quality, as well as course content and delivery. Consider formal and informal ways to gather such mid-course and end-of-course feedback (i.e., survey, discussion, email invitation).
23	Transitions from one unit/module to the next.	To show students how course content is related to or important for future course material they will be exposed to.	Create weekly, unit or module reviews that could include short introductions to upcoming course work as well as addressing the interconnectedness of different course content. Course announcements, videos, or lecture narratives are places to provide this transitional information.
24	Meaningful integration of technology tools to facilitate learning.	To ensure that technology/media used in the course is integrated with an educational purpose.	Evaluate the reasons for using various forms of technology and consider how that technology will enhance learning.
25	Use media to facilitate learning.	To make it easier and more effective for students to engage with the media for purposes of learner.	Make sure audio and video files are clear, file length is adequate, players required are compatible with multiple systems, images are optimized for efficient loading, and hyperlinks open in appropriate windows; explain download requirements and/or identify file types.
26	Attention to appropriate copyright and fair use laws.	To make sure you are not breaking any copyright or fair use laws as you share materials in your course.	Review the UW-L Murphy Library Copyright page and their fair use page, along with the U.S. Copyright Office and their policy on fair use .
27	Attention to student accessibility.	To ensure that the course is accessible to all students.	Include captioning and/or transcripts for audio and video files, do not use color to convey meaning, use alternative text or descriptions for images, define hyperlinks in writing (not “click here” with no explanation of where “here” is); more information can be found in these tutorials . Creating a more accessible class can benefit the learning of all students.



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Delivery

	Guideline	Purpose	Suggestions
28	A message to students prior to the beginning of the course that shares course related information.	To prepare students for course expectations prior to the scheduled start date of the course.	One to two weeks before the class starts, send students an e-mail letting them know how they can access the course and explaining course expectations, along with textbook access information. Give them your contact information should they have questions. If completed, send them the syllabus to review. Let them know approximately how many hours per week they can expect to work on the course and share tips for student success. Also consider opening a portion of your course to allow students to get acclimated to the course management system and start reviewing course related information (but not start working on assignments, quizzes, etc.)
29	A welcome message with instructions on how to get started.	To make it clear what students need to do when they first log in and begin the class; to facilitate student familiarity with D2L, establish expectations, introduce the syllabus, and describe course requirements.	Post your welcome message in the “News Item” area in D2L and format it so it is the first news item seen when students log in to the course in D2L. Considering making an orientation video and including it in the welcome message.
30	A message to missing students early in the class to encourage participation.	To help students that might not be sure of participation expectations to get on track and to help you as the instructor finalize the class roster.	Contact any students not participating in class early (e.g., first week in a regular semester course, first or second day in an intersession course) to encourage participation and to determine their class status. If participation is due to technological issue, direct the student to the Eagle Help Desk .
31	Student-to-student interaction.	To help students get to know each other and develop a sense of community while collaboratively learning about the course content.	Facilitate the learning process by engaging students in learning and monitoring student progress. Ask probing questions and provide direction in discussions, as needed. Monitor and support student interaction in group or whole-class discussions or activities.
32	Student-to-instructor interaction.	To facilitate student and instructor interaction in the course and help students know the instructor is available to aid learning in the online environment.	Model consistent and deep interactions in the discussions. Offer informal assessments. Provide feedback on assignments and assessments on a consistent and timely basis, as defined. Respond to emails in the timeframe as promised. Hosting consistent virtual office hours.



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33	Regular and timely feedback regarding student performance.	To provide feedback on course progress that helps students make necessary adjustments for upcoming learning and assessments.	Share with students the time frame (<i>e.g.</i> , 48 hours) during which they can expect to receive feedback related to their grades and do your best to provide feedback as promised. Set aside time each week or day to provide quality feedback to your students.
34	Use of the time-release function in D2L, or scheduled-opening of course material.	To help decrease confusion and keep students on track with course requirements to optimize learning.	Time release only the course material students need to successfully complete course activities for a given week, unit or module.
35	Modeling of discussion participation, behavior and tone.	To set a good example to the students regarding interactions in the discussions and to encourage community building.	Meet or exceed the requirements you have for your students with discussion participation. Always communicate in the discussions in a respectful manner. Introduce yourself and greet each student in the “icebreaker” discussion.
36	Monitoring of discussion activities for appropriate student behavior and accurate information.	To make sure student posts in the discussions are respectful and appropriate, and that all information shared is accurate.	Monitor the discussion in your class on a regular basis and immediately address inappropriate posts and inaccurate information.
37	Summaries of discussions.	To share with students various themes and interesting points that come up during discussion activities.	Since students are not always required to read every discussion post, or are working in groups for discussion, consider summarizing and sharing the major themes that emerge during a week, unit or module in the discussions. Highlight examples of exemplary work.
38	Effective group work practices.	To facilitate productive groups that contribute to course learning.	Let students know group rosters before they are to get started on a project. Monitor group progress and offer continual feedback and support. Consider assigning students to groups to eliminate the time and difficulty sometimes involved if left at the discretion of students. If groups decide to work in a synchronous way they must meet the needs of all group members. Develop assessments students can use for peer review.
39	Prompt responses to student questions.	To show students you are fully engaged with the class and promptly address questions or concerns students may have; to keep students learning content at a	Response time to questions correspond with the communication expectations shared with students. Often instructors will strive to contact students within 24 to 48 hours during a 14-week semester course and on the same day (possibly within 8 hours) for an intersession (3-4 week) course. Let students know if you will or will not be available for





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		consistent rate.	questions on the weekends.
40	Regular communication with students to maintain positive rapport.	To help students feel like the instructor is fully engaged with the class and is concerned about learning course content.	Share applicable and timely information about the course. Post messages and share current events. Summarize discussions. Provide meaningful and regular feedback on student work. Regularly participate in discussion activities. Provide illustrations and examples to explain important concepts. Add examples and stories from your experience as a practitioner. Consider posting in various ways with different tools on a regular basis. Reply to student emails professionally and promptly.
41	A designated schedule that is followed.	To help decrease confusion and to minimize disruption among students.	Do your best to follow the published schedule of activities and assessments shared at the beginning of the class. If changes in the schedule cannot be avoided, communicate this clearly and as early as possible with the students.
42	Encourage students to look at content in meaningful and deeper ways.	To encourage students to be fully engaged with course content and learn course material beyond a superficial level.	This can be accomplished by asking probing questions in discussion activities, and challenging but encouraging students with feedback. Ask students to view content from various perspectives, compare/contrast issues, and critically reflect on content.
43	Enforcement of expectations and guidelines for learner behavior.	To help promote academic effort, consistency in course delivery, and decrease disruptions in the class.	Have a late work policy outlined in the syllabus and stick to it. Enforce netiquette expectations. Enforce due dates and deadlines. Regularly communicate course expectations with students. Use defined expectations as basis for feedback and continual improvement.
44	Administer assessments and evaluations to uphold academic integrity.	To deter academic dishonesty in your course.	Take advantage of campus tools to identify and address discrepant work. Recognize inconsistencies in character or presentation of work. Here is a tutorial with several ideas.
45	Rubrics or grading criteria that are the basis for grading feedback.	To promote consistency when scoring graded assessments and to let students know what is expected of them for graded assessments.	Develop rubrics or detailed grading criteria for graded assessments in the class. Share those rubrics with students. Use the Rubric tool in D2L. Use defined expectations as basis for feedback and continual improvement.
46	Regularly updated grades in D2L.	To update student grades in a timely manner and allow students to monitor their progress in the class.	Share with students the time frame they can expect to have their scores updated in the Grades area in D2L (e.g., 24 hours) and update grades as stated in your expectations. Set a regular schedule to assess work and update grades in D2L.





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47	Transitions from one topic to the next.	To show students how course content is related to or important for future course material they will be exposed to.	Post weekly, unit or module reviews or "News Items" that include this transitional information and are customized based on material covered and discussed by students.
48	A note to students on how long course materials will be available after the course completion date.	To notify students of how long they will have access to course material.	Clearly communicate with students when they will no longer have access to course materials in D2L. By default, a course in D2L is available for access to students 5 weeks post course completion date. This can be changed by instructor but should be communicated to students. The online syllabus template includes this clause.
49	A final course wrap-up.	To share any final information regarding the course with the students.	Provide a wrap-up for the purpose of course closure. Consider adding information about how the course will be beneficial in future directions of study or career, and applications in the world. A final course wrap-up can be posted in the "News Item" area in D2L or with an e-mail to the entire class.
50	Information about the process to complete the SEI or other end-of-course feedback.	To make it easy for students to have access to complete the SEI or other end-of-course feedback.	Clearly let students know how they can access the SEI or other end-of-course feedback form, how long it will be available, what they need to do to complete it, etc. Note: SEI completion for online courses is a departmental policy.
51	Prompt posting of final grades.	To notify students of their final grade in the class as soon as possible.	Use the Grades area in D2L to determine students' final grades in the class as early as you can. Encourage students to view their final grade in D2L and contact you with any questions. This helps reduce grade-related questions after final grades have been posted in Wings, reduces the number of grade change forms instructors need to complete, etc.



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Review

	Guideline	Purpose	Suggestions
52	Examine student feedback.	To use student feedback to improve the course.	Review data collected in mid-course and final course feedback surveys; use this data to devise a plan for course revision. Review discussion posts, emails, etc. where students ask clarifying questions about content or assessments; use this data to make changes to directions, expectations, content, etc. Document updates/improvements made in the course based on student feedback.
53	Correct spelling and grammar mistakes.	To present all course related materials in a professional manner.	Review all course materials prior to teaching the class and check for spelling and grammar mistakes.
54	Review all links and media.	To present all course related materials in a professional manner.	Review all links and media used in the class prior to teaching to make sure links are live and media is working correctly.
55	Reflect on course improvements.	To continuously strive for quality improvement.	Reflect on such things as instructor presence, response time, involvement in discussion, content delivery, integration of appropriate media, inclusion of instructor voice, collaborative learning techniques, inclusion of useful feedback, etc.
56	Examine student performance data.	To use student performance data to improve the course.	Review D2L analytics in regards to content usage, time on tasks, sequencing of materials, etc. Review quiz question statistics. Reflect on missing themes in written assignments. Redesign activities that cause concern for academic dishonesty. Identify what ideas or concepts students often struggle with or usually need help with, and consider ways to integrate technology to help students better learn or understand course concepts.
57	Update the course to include new features in D2L.	To fully utilize D2L and to enhance your course.	Stay up-to-date on features in D2L and consider how those features can increase course, student, or instructor efficiency and effectiveness.
58	Meet department standards for currency of content and student learning outcomes.	To ensure that content covered is consistent with the departmental standards and to allow students exposure to the most current research and content in your field.	Discuss course outcomes and objectives with your department. Ensure that what you are teaching is current, consistent with the same courses being taught by colleagues, and meeting the needs of students taking your course as a prerequisite to other courses.

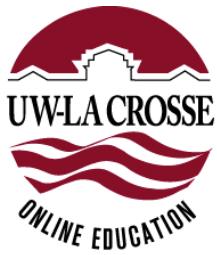


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Part 2: Checklist

Design and Development		
#	Demonstrates	Course includes:
1	<input type="checkbox"/>	Information about being an online learner.
2	<input type="checkbox"/>	A comprehensive syllabus.
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	A list of university academic resources with links to appropriate websites.
4	<input type="checkbox"/>	A welcome message with instructions on how to get started.
5	<input type="checkbox"/>	A consistent navigation structure.
6	<input type="checkbox"/>	Student-to-student interaction.
7	<input type="checkbox"/>	Student-to-instructor interaction.
8	<input type="checkbox"/>	Course and unit/module learning objectives that are measurable and clearly stated.
9	<input type="checkbox"/>	Assessments and activities that are aligned with the learning objectives.
10	<input type="checkbox"/>	Task list for students that detail what they are to do each week/unit/module.
11	<input type="checkbox"/>	An introductory or icebreaker discussion activity.
12	<input type="checkbox"/>	Separate discussion forums for general course questions, community building, and items related to course content.
13	<input type="checkbox"/>	Discussion topics that stimulate thought and reflection related to course content.
14	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clearly articulated group work expectations.
15	<input type="checkbox"/>	Inclusion of instructor impressions and perspectives on course material.
16	<input type="checkbox"/>	Varied opportunities for students to interact with content.
17	<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide support materials for complex course concepts.
18	<input type="checkbox"/>	Design assessments and evaluations to uphold academic integrity.
19	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ongoing, varied and multiple activities and assessments to assess student learning.





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20	<input type="checkbox"/>	Detailed instructions and explanations for all assessments.
21	<input type="checkbox"/>	An organized grades area set up with all graded activities.
22	<input type="checkbox"/>	Opportunities for students to give course and content related feedback.
23	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transitions from one unit/module to the next.
24	<input type="checkbox"/>	Meaningful integration of technology tools to facilitate learning.
25	<input type="checkbox"/>	Use media to facilitate learning.
26	<input type="checkbox"/>	Attention to appropriate copyright and fair use laws.
27	<input type="checkbox"/>	Attention to student accessibility.

Comments:

Delivery

	Demonstrates	Course includes:
28	<input type="checkbox"/>	A message to students prior to the beginning of the course that shares course related information.
29	<input type="checkbox"/>	A welcome message with instructions on how to get started.
30	<input type="checkbox"/>	A message to missing students early in the class to encourage participation.
31	<input type="checkbox"/>	Student-to-student interaction.
32	<input type="checkbox"/>	Student-to-instructor interaction.
33	<input type="checkbox"/>	Regular and timely feedback regarding student performance.
34	<input type="checkbox"/>	Use of the time-release function in D2L, or scheduled-opening of course material.
35	<input type="checkbox"/>	Modeling of discussion participation, behavior and tone.
36	<input type="checkbox"/>	Monitoring of discussion activities for appropriate student behavior and accurate information.
37	<input type="checkbox"/>	Summaries of discussions.



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38	<input type="checkbox"/>	Effective group work practices.
39	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prompt responses to student questions.
40	<input type="checkbox"/>	Regular communication with students to maintain positive rapport.
41	<input type="checkbox"/>	A designated schedule that is followed.
42	<input type="checkbox"/>	Encourage students to look at content in meaningful and deeper ways.
43	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enforcement of expectations and guidelines for learner behavior.
44	<input type="checkbox"/>	Administer assessments and evaluations to uphold academic integrity.
45	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rubrics or grading criteria that are the basis for grading feedback.
46	<input type="checkbox"/>	Regularly updated grades in D2L.
47	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transitions from one topic to the next.
48	<input type="checkbox"/>	A note to students on how long course materials will be available after the course completion date.
49	<input type="checkbox"/>	A final course wrap-up.
50	<input type="checkbox"/>	Information about the process to complete the SEI or other end-of-course feedback.
51	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prompt posting of final grades.

Comments:

Course Revisions and Improvements

	Demonstrates	Instructor:
52	<input type="checkbox"/>	Examine student feedback.
53	<input type="checkbox"/>	Correct spelling and grammar mistakes.
54	<input type="checkbox"/>	Review all links and media.
55	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reflect on course improvements.





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56	<input type="checkbox"/>	Examine student performance data.
57	<input type="checkbox"/>	Update the course to include new features in D2L.
58	<input type="checkbox"/>	Meet department standards for currency of content and student learning outcomes.
	Comments:	

Credits

- Rubric for Online Instruction from California State University Chico:
http://www.csuchico.edu/roi/the_rubric.shtml
- Quality Online Course Initiative: Illinois Online Network, University of Illinois:
<http://www.ion.uillinois.edu/initiatives/qoci/>
- Assessing Online Facilitation Instrument: A 2007 TIGERS Project Sponsored by CSU Center for Distributed Learning: <http://www.humboldt.edu/aof/AssessingOnlineFacilitationInstrument.pdf>
- University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Handbook for Peer Evaluation of Online and Blended Courses:
<http://tinyurl.com/UWMEvalHandbook>
- Penn State Quality Assurance eLearning Design Standards: <https://weblearning.psu.edu/resources/penn-state-online-resources/qualityassurance/>