A Model to Apply or Judge eLearning Curriculum

This set of guidelines and resources identifies important criteria to evaluate and share eLearning curriculum content and courses. The Curriculum Development Work Group reviewed essential eLearning curriculum criteria from various states including Massachusetts, New York, Oregon and Texas, and a variety of professional organizations including the Southern Region Education Board (SREB) and the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). The 2004 NLI Curriculum Development Work Group discussed programs that states already had in place and their methods of digital curriculum evaluation. The work group presents a model selection tool for all consumers of eLearning curriculum to evaluate online courses and essential eLearning elements. Because each state and locale has different learning objectives and contextual constraints, the Curriculum Development Work Group recommends that eLearning stakeholders use this model course evaluation as a reference to create their own standards to evaluate the quality of online courses. Some course components and criteria provided here may not be applicable while others should be added. Similarly, point values and cut-offs for selection should be made by state and local eLearning stakeholders.

Online & Electronic Course Evaluation:
A Tool to Assist the Selection or Approval of Online and Electronic Courses

This evaluation has two parts: Phase I addresses critical components that should be present in a quality eLearning course. Phase II addresses the quality of components of the eLearning course. If the eLearning course in question does not exhibit all of the critical components in the Phase I review, the evaluation should progress to Phase II only after careful consideration.

Phase I: Critical Components of eLearning Courses

Critical Components	Present	Absent	Comments/Indicators (optional)
Course is developed based on national or state content standards for students.			
Each electronically delivered course results in learning comparable in rigor and breadth to learning in a traditionally delivered course.			
Technical requirements are established to ensure that students have acceptable access to the course.			
Minimum student technology competencies required to be successful in this course are listed.			
Fair, adequate methods and procedures to measure students' mastery of course content are used.			
Students receive timely and informative feedback about their progress, and interaction with instructor/facilitator.			
Information regarding the teacher's credentials is provided. This should include: ★ Licensing; ★ Academic background; ★ Technological skill; and ★ Evidence of training and/or experience in web-based courses.			
IDEA and ADA accessibility requirements are addressed.			
A complete course syllabus is available for review.			
Security is addressed: ★ Student work, grades and course materials are secure from access by others.			
The instructional design for the course includes student assessment.			
The course provides for both teacher and course evaluation and feedback.			
Technical assistance is available.			

Critical Components	Present	Absent	Comments/Indicators (optional)
Copyright compliance is addressed by source.			

Phase II: eLearning Course Quality

Course Criteria	Does Not Meet Expectations (0 point value)	Meets Expectations (1 point value)	Exceeds Expectations (2 point value)	Comments/Indicators (optional)
Instructional Design				
Clear and explicit alignment exists between objectives, assessments, instructional strategies, content and technology.				
The content of the course is aligned with local, state, and/or national standards.				
Course navigation is intuitive and appropriate for the content.				
Course is adaptable and flexible to meet the individual needs of the students and teachers.				
Appropriate tools and methods are used to foster collaboration and interaction between the instructor and students, and between the students.				
Instructional objectives are defined and measurable.				
Content and Applicable Standards				
The content of the course meets or exceeds the rigor, depth, and breadth of traditionally delivered courses, is accurate and up-to-date and fosters deeper understanding of the subject area.				
The content provides frequent and timely interactions between the students and the eLearning teacher, as well as interactions among the students.				
The learning environment and course materials are universally designed, making them accessible to diverse learners.				

Course Criteria	Does Not Meet Expectations (0 point value)	Meets Expectations (1 point value)	Exceeds Expectations (2 point value)	Comments/Indicators (optional)
The technology is easy to use, allowing learners to focus on the course content.				
Instructional design and course content is learner, background, and age appropriate.				
The content of the course provides students with opportunities to improve learning skills using real world technological tools, including: * Information and communication skills (information and media literacy and communication skills); * Thinking and problem-solving skills (critical thinking and systems thinking, problem identification, formulation and solution, creativity and intellectual curiosity); and *Interpersonal and self-directional skills (interpersonal and collaborative skills, self-direction, accountability and adaptability, social responsibility).				
The course content utilizes the full potential of web-based and multimedia resources to facilitate and enhance learning				
The course content reflects real world situations that are relevant to the student and provide a broader perspective.				

Course Criteria	Does Not Meet Expectations (0 point value)	Meets Expectations (1 point value)	Exceeds Expectations (2 point value)	Comments/Indicators (optional)
Evaluation and Assessment				
Courses are evaluated on a regular basis to determine whether they are achieving their objectives. Improvements are made based on these evaluations.				
Teacher performance evaluation is conducted no less frequently than once a year.				
Student assessments are aligned with local, state, and national standards.				
The course provides ways to assess student participation and achievement of learning goals.				
Staffing and Qualifications				
The eLearning teacher is fully qualified in the content area being taught.				
The teacher has been trained and is skilled in eLearning pedagogy.				
The school designates an onsite coordinator, who manages technical and administrative issues and serves as the primary contact person between the school, the students, and the course provider.				

Course Criteria	Does Not Meet Expectations (0 point value)	Meets Expectations (1 point value)	Exceeds Expectations (2 point value)	Comments/Indicators (optional)
Management, Administration and Infrastructure				
The course provider has adequate services necessary to deliver the program of instruction.				
Student rights and responsibilities are recognized and upheld within the course structure.				
The course provider and eLearning teachers adhere to and communicate copyright, as well as other laws and guidelines, pertaining to the distribution and ethical use of all resources.				
School personnel, parents, and students are notified, in advance, of course requirements (including time and participation requirements), technical requirements and the skills needed to be successful in eLearning.				
The credit for the course is awarded by the local school district responsible for a specific student's education or other credit-granting institution.				
Additional Criteria				

Points by Column:				**Total Points:**

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