

Checklist – Content, Tools, & Technologies

Instructional design literature and numerous course development rubrics point to the importance of systematically designing and aligning course elements (click here to see a brief overview of [systematic alignment guides](#) as well as a [course rubric comparison table](#)). A central part of these considerations is the course content as well as the instructional materials, tools, and technologies that one uses in the design and development of a course. The following checklist is therefore intended to help guide you in these considerations. There are many resources that are available to help you in these areas in far greater detail. As a result, the following are merely beginning areas to think about as you choose the content, tools, and technologies for your course. As always, please adapt this checklist to fit with your own needs.

COURSE CONTENT & INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS:

☐ General Characteristics & Guidelines:

- ☐ The purpose and use of content and materials is clearly stated
- ☐ Content and materials are up to date with the current trends and knowledge in the discipline
- ☐ A variety of course content and materials is utilized
- ☐ Content is chunked into manageable and logically sequenced segments throughout the course (for more information on organizing your course, see the [course organization](#) checklist)
- ☐ Required versus optional/supplemental materials is clearly delineated and noted for learners
- ☐ Content and materials are appropriately cited and the required permissions are obtained (for more information on copyright considerations, see the [course organization](#) checklist)

☐ Additional Systematic Alignment Considerations:

- ☐ Course content and materials (C&M) are clearly and directly aligned with course objectives, activities, assessments, teaching and learning theories, tools and technologies, and contextual analyses (click here to see a brief overview of [systematic alignment guides](#)):

- ☐ C&M directly support the pursuit of objectives and any content/materials that are not directly related to the objectives are minimized – click here to see guidelines for developing [objectives](#)
- ☐ C&M are able to be directly and adequately engaged via the chosen course pedagogies, strategies, and activities – click here to see guidelines for choosing [pedagogies, strategies, and activities](#)
- ☐ Learners' deep engagement with the selected C&M is able to be evaluated via the courses' assessment systems – click here to see guidelines for developing [assessments](#)
- ☐ C&M selected are congruent with the teaching and learning theories for the course (e.g., the content and materials are able to be engaged in ways that lead to the kinds of deeper learning that is depicted by these theories) – click here to see guidelines for considering [teaching and learning theories](#)
- ☐ C&M are able to be adequately engaged using the selected course tools and technologies (see below for guidelines on selecting these)
- ☐ C&M are appropriate for the instructor's as well as each learners' abilities, diversities, and background, they are locally available for use in the course, and they align with the contextual analysis that has been conducted as well as with the instructional design methods being utilized – click here to see guidelines for considering [contextual analysis and instructional design methods](#)
- ☐ Content and materials are aligned across discipline and institutional levels (e.g., C&Ms that are commonly used in one's discipline are incorporated, institutional materials are utilized, etc.)
 - ☐ The content chosen for the course focuses on issues and values that are considered to be of central importance. For example, if environmental concerns are crucial to the college, then case studies, projects, examples, et cetera are chosen to directly engage with these issues as they relate to the specific discipline.
- ☐ Content and materials are aligned across course, module/unit, and lesson/topic levels such that lower level content and materials collectively and comprehensively address higher level content and materials (e.g., if a textbook is used then its' relevant sections/chapters are addressed across modules/units, all intended content is addressed across the entire course, etc.)

COURSE TOOLS & TECHNOLOGIES:☐ General Characteristics & Guidelines:

- ☐ A variety of equivalent and alternative tools and technologies are available to help meet diverse needs
 - ☐ Multiple options provide alternatives in the event that the specific tools and technologies are not working
- ☐ Tools and technologies are current and functioning at the time of use
- ☐ Tools and technologies are compliant with appropriate policies and formats (e.g., ADA, etc. - for more information on this, see the [course organization](#) checklist)
- ☐ Low or no cost technologies are used wherever possible
- ☐ No more than 2-3 new technologies are introduced to learners to use unless specified otherwise by the objectives (such as for a survey class on discipline-specific technologies)
- ☐ Links are provided to privacy and confidentiality policies for all technologies that are used in the course, especially technologies outside of the learning management system (for more information on this, see the [course organization](#) checklist)

☐ Additional Systematic Alignment Considerations:

- ☐ Course tools and technologies (T&Ts) are clearly and directly aligned with course objectives, content & materials, assessments, teaching and learning theories, strategies and activities, and contextual analyses (click here to see a brief overview of [systematic alignment guides](#)):
 - ☐ T&Ts directly support the pursuit of the objectives and T&Ts that are not directly related to these objectives are minimized – click here to see guidelines for developing [objectives](#)
 - ☐ T&Ts directly supports, enhances, and/or extends engagement with and delivery of course content and materials and should help to facilitate quick and easy access to these (for help with choosing such content and materials, see the guidelines above)
 - ☐ T&Ts directly support engagement with and delivery of course assessments and should help to facilitate quick and easy access to these – click here to see guidelines for developing [assessments](#)

- ☐ T&Ts are congruent with and help to facilitate the kinds of deeper learning and development that are depicted by the teaching and learning theories – click here to see guidelines for considering [teaching and learning theories](#)
- ☐ T&Ts directly support engagement with and delivery of course pedagogies, strategies, and activities and should help to facilitate quick and easy access to these – click here to see guidelines for choosing [pedagogies, strategies, and activities](#)
- ☐ T&Ts are appropriate for the instructor's as well as each learners' abilities, diversities, and backgrounds, are able to be adequately implemented in the local context, and they align with the contextual analysis that has been conducted as well as the instructional design methods being utilized – click here to see guidelines for considering [contextual analysis and instructional design methods](#)
 - ☐ In particular, the instructor and each learner is not only able to access the tools and technologies but they also have the technical skills to use them in the ways specified in the course (for more information on accessibility and navigation, see the [course organization](#) checklist)
 - ☐ Technologies used are accessible by learners using slow internet connections (e.g., use streamed videos, use the jpeg or gif format for pictures and images, large files are divided into smaller files if possible, etc)
- ☐ T&Ts are aligned across discipline, institutional, and course levels (e.g., T&Ts that are commonly used at the institution and/or in the discipline are utilized, T&Ts at the module/unit level are congruent/compatible with those at the course level, etc.)
 - ☐ Course technologies and tools reflect the values of the school. For instance, if working with lower socio-economic status (SES) students is important, then low or no cost technologies, tools, and resources are intentionally chosen.

MULTIMEDIA PRINCIPLES:

- ☐ Multimedia is easy to access and use
- ☐ Use of multimedia content that does not directly support, enhance, or extend course objectives and content are minimized (e.g., eliminate images added purely for aesthetics, providing an external link to YouTube where learners might become distracted by other and unrelated videos, etc.)
- ☐ Allow for learner control and playback of all audio, videos, animations, simulations, etc.

- ☐ Text complements and supports multimedia and vice versa and both further the learning of course concepts
 - ☐ Both are co-located on the same screen/page such that little to no scrolling is needed and/or little to no time passes before both are presented
- ☐ Multimedia is segmented into parts and is paired with associated learning activities that deepen learning and engagement with the material rather than being streamed all at one time (a common guideline in the literature is to keep multimedia to less than 15-20 minutes and not to address more than 2-3 main concepts without having the students engage with these concepts in active ways before moving onto more concepts – click here for guidelines on developing course [pedagogies, strategies, and activities](#))
- ☐ Highlight, or “signal,” important concepts, terms, etc. (e.g., bold, underline, point to the concepts, animate terms, etc.)
- ☐ Use images and spoken words together rather than images and text (which both use the visual channel) to present information – i.e., utilize audio and visual channels together

For more information and to see the references used to develop this template, click here to view the [Course Design & Development Guidelines](#).