Instructor Name: _____

Course Title, Number, Section: _____

Title: _____

Semester Reviewed: _____

Email Address: _____

Reviewer: _____

Which training and professional development activities did the instructor complete to develop and teach an online or hybrid course?

_____

Reviewer Comments: _____

Online and Hybrid Course Review Checklist

The University of Texas at Tyler is dedicated to delivering high-quality education across all delivery formats. Our online and hybrid courses are categorized as distance education by the US Department of Education, which mandates 'regular and substantive interaction' to distinguish them from correspondence courses. To ensure compliance with this standard and to uphold the quality of online and hybrid classes at UT Tyler, we have developed a checklist aligned with the Principles of Good Practice for Distance Education. This checklist adheres to guidelines from THECB, SACSCOC, and other regulatory agencies. It serves as a tool for instructors and department chairs to assess the design and implementation of online and hybrid courses, offering actionable feedback and fostering continuous improvement.

Key Considerations

While online classes can vary in how they are organized and taught, there are some key elements that are considered essential for quality in online courses. Our review will focus on the following key areas:

- **Course Setup & Organization**
- **Instructional Content & Assessment**
- **Instructor Presence,**
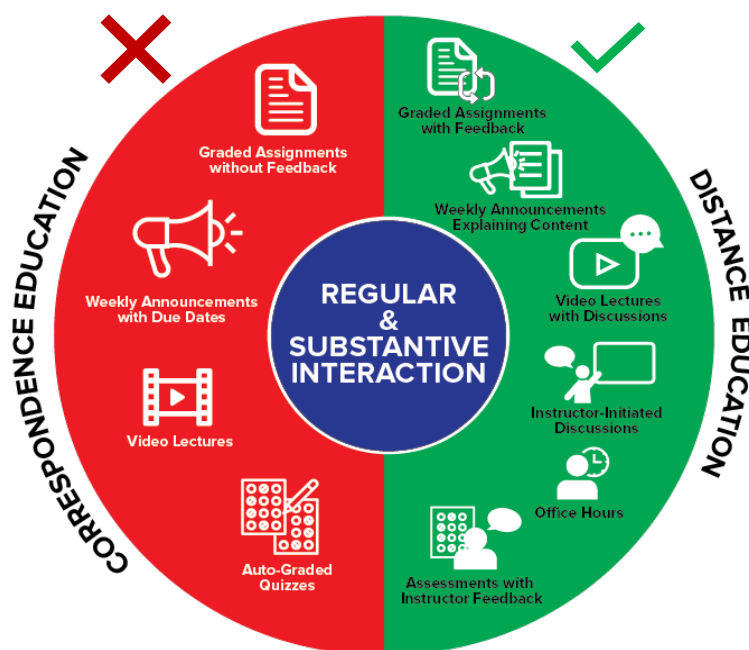- **Communication &**
- **Feedback**
- **Technology**

Image by UTRGV, Center for Online Learning and Teaching Technology

Course Setup & Organization

Comments/Suggestions

Course Format

The course must be offered in the format it is listed on the schedule (face-to-face/hybrid/online). In an asynchronous course, instructors can offer optional synchronous sessions and share recordings of the sessions with the class. These synchronous sessions need to be listed on the course schedule and syllabus with specific dates and times.

Visual Layout / Organization

The course content is clearly presented and structured in a logical, consistent, and uncluttered manner. Course navigation facilitates ease of use. All pages/modules have a consistent format and organization throughout the course. Visible Canvas navigation tabs only include those utilized by the course. The course content is organized into modules or weekly units which make logical sense.

Getting Started

It is obvious where to begin through a visually prominent "Getting Started" or "Start Here" module or page. It provides clear expectations on the flow and structure of the course.

Instructor Introduction

The instructor creates community by providing an opportunity for students to connect with the instructor and introducing themselves both personally and professionally.

Course Introduction

An overview of the course and its content is provided with information about the organization of the course, course objectives, expectations, and course policies.

Student Introductions

The course provides opportunities for students to connect with the instructor and with each other starting at the first week of class. Students introduce themselves in both a professional and personal manner.

Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are explicitly stated and contain measurable action verbs and expected outcomes. These outcomes are of an appropriate level to the course and its position in the program.

☐ **Syllabus**

   ☐ Contact Info: Instructor name, office, phone, and email contact
   ☐ Office hour dates, times, and modality
   ☐ TA Contact (if appropriate)
   ☐ Course overview
   ☐ Student learning outcomes
   ☐ Required textbooks and recommended readings (if applicable)
   ☐ Special course notes (e.g., external websites or resources required, proctoring requirements, field trips, etc.)
   ☐ Assignments with weights/point values and grading scales. Brief descriptions of significant assignments are required.
   ☐ Late work and make-up exam expectations
   ☐ Calendar of topics and due dates
   ☐ Expectations for any required face-to-face, on-ground work (e.g., internships, specialized laboratory work) are stated clearly
   ☐ AI statement
   ☐ Available before the first day of class

Instructional Content & Assessment

Comments/Suggestions

☐ **On-Level**

The tone and rigor of course content is appropriate for the level and demographic of students enrolled in the course.

☐ **Equivalent Effort**

Online course academic standards match expectations of face-to-face course academic standards. <u>Follow UT-Tyler definition and expectations for credit-hour.</u>

☐ **Current and Timely Content**

Instructional content is relevant to the course topic and has been produced within the last three years.

☐ **Aligned Instructional Materials**

Instructional materials contribute to the achievement of learning objectives.

☐ **Varied Instructional Materials**

Materials use a variety of mediums and formats (text, video, lectures, scholarly articles, etc.)

☐ **Instructor Generated Content Included**

Every module has at least one short instructional video created by the instructor. (less than 15 minutes) Instructors develop their own videos and text explaining concepts in addition to any publisher content and/or externally developed materials.

☐ **Aligned Learning Activities**

All activities align with the course learning outcomes and promote achievement.

☐ **Active Learning**

Learning activities facilitate multiple meaningful interactions between students and course content, students and instructor, and students with other students. (For example, students are required to do an assignment or participate in discussions to further engage with learning materials and apply the concepts learned in the module.)

☐ **Available Learning Activity Resources**

All activities are technologically achievable and referenced appropriately in Canvas for easy access.

☐ **Multiple & Varied Assessments**

A combination of formative and summative assessments are used throughout the course. Every module or unit includes formative assessments where students apply the concepts and receive instructor feedback. (quizzes, projects, discussions, essays, case studies, presentations etc.) Online courses containing only a mid-term and final exam is not best practice.

☐ **Clear Assignment Criteria**

Each activity and assessment are presented in detail. Rubrics are provided before student work is started which outline criteria in a manner understandable to a third party. Each rubric accurately measures student learning outcomes. When needed, students are provided with examples.

☐ **Timely Assignment Feedback**

A timeframe is clearly articulated for instructor feedback. Feedback is provided in a timely manner after student submissions.

☐ **Accurate Gradebook**

Activities have corresponding items in the Canvas gradebook and align with the syllabus policies and grading scheme. Grades are posted regularly throughout the course.

☐ **Copyright Observed**

All course materials meet copyright standards by citing sources and obtaining permission as appropriate.

☐ **First Week Assignment**

During the first week of class, a student submission is required for financial aid purposes. (For example, graded introductions post, discussion post, quiz etc.)

Instructor Presence, Communication & Feedback

Comments/Suggestions

☐ **Communications Policy**

Students are given expectations which are outlined regarding the timeliness and appropriateness of the communication mediums provided. Interactions are productive and respectful.

☐ **Instructor Presence**

The instructor feels present in the course and initiates communication. Interactions are productive, respectful and promote student engagement with the course material in a meaningful way. (Regular announcements, timely personalized feedback on assignments, instructor facilitated discussions, scheduled regular office hours, review/ help sessions, etc.) Instructors are available to support and communicate with students and oversee student projects and evaluation. The instructor's image is used in course content to promote a personalized classroom experience.

☐ **Regular & Substantive Interaction**

The U.S Dept. of Education requires all online and hybrid courses to have regular and substantive interactions. Regular and substantive interaction is defined as consistent and meaningful interaction between students, instructors, and instructional content. The instructor is actively involved in teaching and engaging students through regularly scheduled and intentionally planned activities. At least one hour per week is spent by instructors in direct instructional activities for every credit hour associated with the course (i.e., 3 hours per week for 3-hour course). Regular interactions with students occur through a variety of methods and mediums:

- ☐ Provide direct instruction through on-screen text, videos, or synchronous sessions
- ☐ Communicate with students regularly through a variety of mediums: email, assignment feedback, regular office hours, etc.
- ☐ Regular announcements are used to remind students of coursework, clarify assignment expectations, discuss previous topics, and/or highlight key concepts.
- ☐ Timely, personalized, and detailed feedback are provided to students regularly. In addition to assigning grades, feedback should include written comments, detailed rubrics, audio or video notes, and/or examples for improvement.
- ☐ Actively participate in online discussion boards by posing questions, proposing alternative viewpoints, connecting ideas, encouraging struggling students, and/or summating each discussion.
- ☐ Schedule synchronous sessions for review sessions, office hours, and/or live lectures, when appropriate. Record these sessions for students who cannot attend.
- ☐ Student feedback is gathered mid-course about their course experience. Consider making adjustments based on their input.

☐ **Weekly Course Announcements**

Identifying feedback on assignments, instruction for upcoming assignments, and other course reminders.

☐ **Virtual Office Hours**

Regular, scheduled virtual office hours are communicated up front and held live using video with technologies such as Zoom or Teams and not via email or offered just "by appointment."

☐ **Instructor Guided Discussion Boards**

All discussion boards have instructor participation through contributing, summating, and/or providing feedback.

☐ **Canvas Engagement Data**

Monitor student participation through Canvas course data and reach out to students in need of further engagement.

Technology

☐ **Required LMS Features**

All online and hybrid courses must be taught using Canvas. Instructors need to utilize announcements, assignments, gradebook, office hours and other Canvas tools to regularly interact with students and to provide feedback.

☐ **Accessibility**

Content is laid out observing accessibility standards: Images have descriptions and alt text; appropriate font headings are utilized; colors meet readability standards; PDFs are used in lieu of PowerPoints. All videos contain closed captioning.

☐ **Universal Design**

Course materials are provided in multiple mediums: alt-text for images, captions or transcripts for videos and simulations.

☐ **Functional LMS Integrations**

All External tools are operational, align with course outcomes and are accessible from Canvas.

☐ **Student Support**

Information is provided on academic support services: Tutoring, Disabilities Resource Center, Library, etc.

Final Comments/Suggestions/Notes: