



# Designing Engaging Online/Blended Courses

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Sudie Whalen, CALPRO Online Course Coordinator  
Victoria Swindell, CALPRO Technical Associate

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# Agenda

- Persistence in an Online and Blended Learning Environments
- Importance of Course Quality
- Course Quality Indicators
- Course Design and Layout
- Designing for Engagement
- Course Engagement Indicators

# Top 5 Key Factors to Success in an Online Course

- Satisfaction with online learning
- A sense of belonging to a learning community
- Support
- Time management skills
- Quality of interactions and feedback

# Common Barriers to Persistence

- Auditory learning style
- Lack of digital literacy
- Difficulty in accessing resources
- Isolation and Decreased Engagement
- Lack of computer access
- Personal life barriers
- Poor communication

# Importance of Assuring Course Design Quality

- Good design solves a problem and communicates a message: every eLearning design project has a definite purpose (or should)
- First Impression is almost always the last impression: first impressions of online content are 94% design related
- Design is closely connected to engagement
- User experience and usability helps achieve your learning goals
- Good design inspires to take action
- Good design helps learners recall

# Course Quality Indicators

- Course overview and information
- Course technology and tools
- Design and Layout
- Content and Activities
- Interaction
- Assessment and Feedback

# Course Design and Layout: Application of User-Friendly Technology

## How

- **Learning Management Systems (LMS):** Moodle, Canvas, Loud Cloud
- **Webinars:** via Adobe Connect, Zoom, GoToWebinar, etc.
- **Use of Media:** graphics, video streaming, interactive media (apps such as polls, quizzes)

## Why

- Structure, consistency, ease of access to course materials (including eBooks, PDF downloads, etc.)
- Interaction, engagement, connect a face to a name, discussion in real-time
- Enhance course text and comprehension, address various learning styles, provide interest, learn technical skills for use outside classroom

# Course Design and Layout: Technology Considerations

- Access to computer
- System requirement
- Skills required and support resources provided (orientation, website, software, hardware)
- Ability to easily access all tech tools and apps



# Course Design and Layout: Visual Appeal and Consistency

- Structure, organization, consistency (“block” and format text)
- Uncluttered; use of whitespace (“breathing room”)
- Color-code; color contrast
- Limit number of fonts (minimum 12-point, sans serif, e.g. Arial, Tahoma)
- Clear instructions
- Linear format preferred; use pre-formatting

# Course Design and Layout: Visual Appeal and Consistency Continued

- User-friendly, consistent navigation
- Graphics with text descriptions
- Tables have titles, description, row and column headers
- Slideshows have slide title, manual transitions



<https://pixabay.com/vectors/speaker-class-lecture-professor-2673919/>

# Course Quality Indicators

## Tools for Success: Scorecard and Dashboard

- OQSCR
- Interactive Rubric
- Interactive Dashboard
- Request your own (it's free!): <https://oscqr.org/get-oscqr/>

# Course Engagement Indicators

- Vision of learning
- Technology
- Instructors Role
- Tasks
- Grouping
- Instructional Model
- Assessment
- Learning Context
- Student Role

# Designing for Engagement: Technology

- **Interconnectivity:** allows interaction by communicating in various ways
- **Access to challenging tasks:** offers or allows access to tasks, data, and learning opportunities that stimulate thought and inquiry
- **Enables learning by doing:** offers access to simulations, goals-based learning, and real-world problems and productivity tools
- **Media Use:** provides opportunities to use and create digital media

# Tools for Success: Faculty and Student Engagement Checklists

- Indicators of Engaged Learning Online: <http://bit.ly/2DZwhBr>
- Faculty Check List:  
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11528-017-0239-4/tables/3>
- Student Check List :  
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11528-017-0239-4/tables/4>

# Resources

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