A Quality Matters “Quickie”

An Introduction to Quality Matters
When discussing online courses, who does quality matter to...

+ S_______
+ F________
+ A_______
+ A_______  A______
+ U_______
+ A________ A______
+ L__________
+ T_____ - P_____
When discussing online courses, who does quality matter to...

- Students
- Faculty
- Administrators
- University
- Accrediting Agencies
- Legislators
- Tax-Payers
Why do we want quality online courses?

- Improve student learning outcomes
- Improve student retention
- Prevent cheating
- Promote interest in the content
- Promote lifelong learning
When it comes to online courses, how do we...

- Define quality?
- Assess quality?
- Measure quality?
- Evaluate quality?
What is Quality Matters (QM)?

- It is a faculty-centered, peer review process designed to certify the quality of online courses and online components.
- It uses a set of tools *(standards)* for designing and reviewing online and blended courses.
- It is:
  - Continuous – quality improvement process
  - Centered – research, student learning and quality
  - Collegial – faculty driven
  - Collaborative – review is conducted among peers
What Quality Matters is NOT

It is NOT:

- About individual instructors (it is about the course design)
- About faculty evaluation (it is about course quality)
- A pass/fail test (it is a diagnostic tool)
- About creating the “perfect” course (create an effective course, better than average – 85%)
The Origins of Quality Matters

- Began as a Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) grant project in 2003.

- Why: The project was to develop an instrument and process through which a quality online course could be recognized by a community of peers in online learning.

- How: The project was research-based, collaborative and peer-centered.

- Results: The project outcome was a rubric tool and a process for applying the rubric in peer reviews of online courses.
Subscription to Quality Matters

+ University of Arizona has a state wide subscription ($1,000)

+ The subscription entitles us to:
  + Access to the Quality Matters Rubric
  + Discount on Professional Development
  + Participation in the QM User Group
  + License to conduct QM Applying the Rubric Workshop
  + Licensed to conduct official course reviews eligible for QM recognition
Did someone say Professional Development (aka. “training”)?

+ Yes – some of the online professional development courses offered are:
  + Applying the QM Rubric
  + QM Peer Reviewer Certification
  + Improving Your Online Course
  + Designing Your Online Course
  + Designing Your Blended Course

+ How much?
  + Time – Two week sessions
  + Cost - $150 - $200

+ https://www.qualitymatters.org/professional-development/courses
The Process

Faculty Course Developers
Institutions
Course
National Standards & Research Literature
Rubric
Faculty Reviewers
Training

Course Meets Quality Expectations
Peer Course Review
Feedback
Course Revision

Instructional Designers
Factors Reviewed in the Process

- Reviewed:
  - Course Design

- Not Reviewed:
  - Course Delivery (faculty performance)
  - Course Content
  - Course Management System
  - University Infrastructure
  - Faculty Training and Readiness
  - Student Engagement and Readiness
The Purpose of the Quality Review

+ Must score more than average; more than “good enough” (85%)
+ Must make an attempt to capture what is expected in an effective online course
+ The score is based upon the QM Rubric which is based on research and widely accepted standards
The Rubric

- Eight General Standards
  - Overall design of the course is clear
  - Learning objectives are clearly stated and explained
  - Assessment strategies and measure are well integrated
  - Instructional materials and resources are sufficiently comprehensive
  - Meaningful interaction in the course
  - Navigation and technology are intuitive
  - Support provided for student success
  - Accessibility (UDL standards)
Instructions make clear how to get started and where to find various course components.
IDEAS? __________________________

Students are introduced to the purpose and structure of the course.
IDEAS? __________________________
+ The **course learning objectives** describe outcomes that are measurable.

+ The **module learning objectives** describe outcomes that are measurable and consistent with the course-level objectives.

+ **HOW DO YOU DO THIS?** ______________
LEARNING OBJECTIVES (COMPETENCIES)

- All learning objectives are stated clearly and written from the student's perspective.
- Instructions to students on how to meet the learning objectives are adequate and stated clearly.
- The learning objectives are appropriately designed for the level of the course.
- HOW DO YOU DO THIS? ____________
The types of **assessments selected measure** the stated learning objectives and are consistent with course activities and resources.

The course **grading policy** is stated clearly.

Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the **evaluation of students’ work** and participation and are tied to the course grading policy.

IDEAS? __________________________
The **instructional materials** contribute to the achievement of the stated course and module/unit learning objectives.

The **purpose of instructional materials** and how the materials are to be used for learning activities are clearly explained.

IDEAS? ________________
LEARNER INTERACTION AND ENGAGEMENT

- The learning activities promote the achievement of the stated learning objectives.

- Learning activities provide opportunities for interaction that support active learning.

- The instructor’s plan for classroom response time and feedback on assignments is clearly stated.

- IDEAS? ____________________________
The tools and media support the course learning objectives.

Course tools and media support student engagement and guide the student to become an active learner.

Navigation throughout the online components of the course is logical, consistent, and efficient.

IDEAS? __________________________
The course instructions articulate or link to a clear description of the technical support offered and how to access it.

Course instructions articulate or link to the institution’s accessibility policies and services.

IDEAS? ____________________________
ACCESSIBILITY

+ The course employs accessible technologies and provides guidance on how to obtain accommodation.

+ IDEAS? ___________________________
Underlying Principles of QM

Based on national standards of best practices, research literature and instructional design principles.

Not to create the “perfect” course, but better than “good enough” (85%)

A continuous quality improvement process involving the faculty to successfully meeting expectation

Faculty driven, peer review process, not an evaluation

Promote student learning
Interested in Quality Matter?

- LATTe (Learning and Teaching with Technology) Group
  - There is a subgroup on Quality Matters

- Statewide network

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http://www.qmprogram.org