University of South Florida, College of Public Health (USF-COPH) Office of Educational Technology and Assessment (ETA) COPH Online Course Minimum Standards (Version 3)

Statement of Purpose:

The purpose of the COPH Online Course Minimum Standards is to assist faculty and the ETA instructional designers to optimize the consistency and quality of online courses, as opposed to evaluating academic content.

Per USF College of Public Health policy, this document is required to be completed for all online courses by the designated ETA instructional designer. An Online Course Review Report based on these standards will be forwarded to the instructor for further input.

Background:

The online environment presents a myriad of challenges for both instructors and their students. Perhaps the most important is the absence of face to face interaction in this relationship. A traditional classroom environment allows an instructor to observe students' facial expressions and body language and gauge their level of understanding and interest; the pace and/or direction of the presentation can then be changed to optimize the educational experience. Advances in technology continue to help bridge that gap but cannot, in their current state, fully compensate for the loss of personal interaction. Being sensitive to such challenges during the design (or redesign) of the course material suited for the online environment can significantly reduce related problems and help optimize the experience for students. Admittedly, this will require additional effort from the instructor. For example, links between subjects which could be made on the fly in a traditional classroom environment must be made more explicit and upfront in an online presentation. It is this dynamic that provided the impetus for this document.

Outline:

There are eight main course components that are highlighted in this document: (1) Course Overview and Learner Support (2) Learning Objectives (3) Instructional Materials (4) Assessment and Feedback (5) Interaction and Collaboration (6) Course Design (7) Accessibility and (8) Course Evaluation.

Scale:

Accomplished (A) - successful implementation of minimum standard Needs Work (NW) - successful implementation of minimum standard is not currently evident Not Applicable (NA) – minimum standard does not apply to this course

Exceptional (Optional): Each course component may have elements that exceed the minimum standards. In such cases exceptional standards and criteria which provide a model of best practice have been listed.

List of Standards (NEW)	
 Course Overview and Learner Support Syllabus Learner Support / Expectations Instructor Presence Learning Objectives Lesson Objectives Pre-instructional Activities 	 Interaction and Collaboration Interaction Interaction Collaboration (Grouping) Course Design Course Organization Pacing Consistency and Accuracy
 Instructional Materials Course Content Instructional Media 	6.4. Visual Design and Usability6.5. Delivery7. Accessibility
 4. Assessment and Feedback 4.1. Learning Activities 4.2. Assessment 4.3. Feedback 	7.1. Accommodations8. Course Evaluation8.1. Course Evaluation

1. Course Overview and Learner Support

A well-designed online course starts with a clear understanding of student/instructor/course expectations. This section covers the syllabus, learner support and expectations of students and instructors.

1.1 Syllabus		
Minimum Standard(s)		
A NW NA	Standard	Criteria
	a. Syllabus includes all required elements of the USF COPH Online Course Syllabus Template.	See <u>Syllabus Template</u>
	b. Course description in syllabus matches with catalog description.	See COPH Catalog, <u>Course Descriptions</u>
	c. Syllabus is saved in a secure cross-platform file type.	Syllabus is posted in printer friendly format using pdf or HTML, and not in any editable versions.
	d. Syllabus clearly indicates the date of publication and last revision.	The date of publication and last revision is clearly stated (e.g. in the footnote or header of the document).
	e. Syllabus update policy is clearly stated and communicated to students.	Instructor creates and shares the syllabus update policy in syllabus to students.
Exceptional (Optional)		
	f. Syllabus includes teaching philosophy.	Instructor shares his/her teaching philosophy statement with students.
Comments		

1.2 Learner Support / Expectations			
Minimum Sta	Minimum Standard(s)		
A NW NA	Standard	Criteria	
	a. Course-at-glance (CAG) document is posted in COPH course schedule.	CAG is available three to five weeks prior to start of the semester. See <u>CAG form</u> .	
	b. Link to ETA technical assistance is placed in course menu.	Link to the ETA technical assistance web page.	
	c. Technology requirements are clearly indicated with links to required software.	A course specific lesson zero is posted on the course site at least one week prior to the semester start. See lesson zero webpage template.	
	d. Course requires an assignment/activity in the first week to meet the USF Office of Registrar requirement.	Policy Assignment/activity may include, email confirmation, discussion posting, survey.	
	e. Student expectations are clearly communicated.	Netiquette policy, task instructions, desired student participation is clearly stated at the beginning of the course and as necessary.	
Exceptional (Optional)			
	f. Instructor explores student expectations of the course.	Instructor includes survey in Lesson Zero to assess student expectations of the course.	
Comments			

1.3 Instructor Presence		
Minimum Standard(s)		
Criteria		

	a. Course Preview or Introduction <u>text/audio/video</u> is presented to students during first week of classes.	Instructor creates a written/audio/video presentation providing an overview of the course. Ex. audio Introduction, <u>video Introduction</u> .
	 b. Instructor creates and shares communication policy. 	Communication policy indicates response times, preferred method of contact and who to contact.
	c. Instructor proactively communicates with students throughout the semester. (needs instructor's input)	Communication tools include announcements, emails, video, discussion postings, podcasts etc. Communication should include feedback on student progress, participation, learning activities and assessments.
Exceptional	(Optional)	
	d. Instructor provides opportunity for class introductions and to create a sense of community.	Course offers an optional synchronous session during first week of classes.
	e. Instructor provides opportunities to virtually meet with students on a regular basis.	Instructor provides virtual office hours for students throughout the semester utilizing Canvas Scheduler.
Comments		

2.0 Learning Objectives

The realization of learning outcomes depends on the instructional integrity of the course, i.e. when lesson objectives, pre-instructional materials, learning activities, and assessments are aligned with each other. This section covers learning objectives.

2.1	2.1 Lesson Objectives		
Min	Minimum Standard(s)		
Α	NW NA	Standard	Criteria
		a. Each lesson includes measurable performance objectives.	 Objectives include audience, measurable behavior, criteria and condition. (Audience, criteria and condition may be omitted in real world contexts (Dick & Carey, 2002).) Objectives are written to address various and appropriate cognitive levels. See <u>Action Verbs for Bloom's Taxonomy</u>.
		b. Lesson objectives are aligned and limited to the course-level objectives or competencies.	Objectives address only course outcomes listed in course goals. If applicable, effort is taken to align performance objectives to known national/professional standards or competencies. Ex. <u>ASPH MPH</u> <u>Competencies</u>
Exceptional (Optional)			
		c. Lesson objectives are written to increase critical thinking.	When applicable, objectives incorporate higher levels of learning (For ex. analyze, evaluate, create).
Comments			

2.2 Pre-Instructional Activities			
Minimum Standard(s)			
Α	NW NA	Standard	Criteria
		a. Each lesson includes an overview.	Lesson overview describes performance objectives, learning activities, assignments, assessments, estimated time frame and resources.

	 b. Course uses a variety of motivational strategies throughout the semester. 	Instructor makes an effort to motivate learners using strategies such as, asking thought-provoking questions, using human-interest examples and relating what is to be learned to important goals in learners' life (e.g., why do we have to study this)
	c. Instructor informs learners of the prerequisite skills and knowledge required to begin instruction.	Lesson provides an initial view of the relationship between the new content and what they already know. (e.g., brief test of the entry behaviors; informing prerequisite knowledge/skills)
Exceptional (Optional)		
Comments		

3.0 Instructional Materials

Instructional materials are selected and/or developed to achieve learning objectives. The materials include all forms of instruction such as instructor's guides, student modules/lessons, multimedia files, web pages, etc. This section covers course content and instructional media.

3.1 Course Content		
Minimum Standard(s)		
A NW NA	Standard	Criteria
	a. Content aligns with learning objectives.	Content addresses outcomes listed in performance objectives.
	b. Content is sequentially presented within the lesson's learning components.	Content is presented in a logical sequence that follows Dick, Carey, and Carey's (2002) five learning components: 1) pre-instructional activity, 2) content presentation, 3) learner participation (practice and feedback), 4) assessment and 5) follow-through activities.
	 c. Quality of content is reasonable for academic level. (needs instructor's input) 	Content has sufficient breadth, depth and currency for students to learn the subject, engage them in critical reasoning and higher order thinking.
	d. A variety of instructional methods are incorporated.	Various instructional methods that promote learning are used. Ex. interactive lecture, case studies, video, discussion
	e. All efforts are made to adhere to copyright laws.	<i>Course materials follow <u>USF Copyright Policy</u>. Ex.</i> streaming video, e-reserves.
Exceptional (Optional)		
	f. Course provides opportunities for students to contribute relevant course content.	When applicable, students generate content relevant to the learning objectives. For ex. resources, glossary, student presentations etc.
Comments		

3.2	3.2 Instructional Media		
Mi	Minimum Standard(s)		
Α	NW NA	Standard	Criteria
		a. Course uses instructional media to engage students and enhance learning.	Instructional media decisions are based on target audience needs and performance objectives. Ex. use of audio in presentations to gain attention; use of video to demonstrate procedures

	b. Course uses a variety of instructional media throughout the semester.	Multiple forms of media are used to provide alternate access to course information throughout the semester. Ex. Text, audio, video, graphics, narrated presentations (audio + text)
	c. Instructional media is posted in appropriate format that are cross platform compatible and designed to meet varied bandwidth considerations.	Suggested file formats: Text (html, pdf, doc) Graphics (jpg, png, gif) Audio (mp3) Video (flv, mp4)
	d. The length of audio/video is adequate to engage students.	Suggested range is 5-15 minutes.
	e. Instructional media content uses navigational controls.	Navigational elements should include forward, back, pause, play, volume controls.
	f. The quality of instructional media presented is compliant with current web design standards.	Clarity and quality of any media presented is of the highest quality, for example, image is optimized to a minimum of 72 dpi.
Exceptional	(Optional)	
	g. Course includes interactive videos that promote active learning.	Existing videos or new videos are enhanced or created using software (e.g. EduCanon) to add questions, make notes and highlight important points.
	h. Instructional materials include effective emerging technologies.	<i>Course incorporates emerging technologies such as social media, virtual reality etc.</i>
	i. Instructor creates original instructional media elements to emphasize lesson objectives.	Instructor creates media from scratch using University resources (for ex. studio, videographer, graphics designer).
Comments		

4.0 Assessment and Feedback

For the accomplishment of learning outcomes, all learning activities and assessments should have constructive feedback. While assessment measures student learning, feedback ensures that students are guided throughout the learning process. This section covers learning activities, assessment of learning and the quality of feedback.

4.1 Learning Activities		
Minimum Standard(s)		
A NW NA	Standard	Criteria
	a. Learning activities aligns with performance objectives.	Learning activities address outcomes listed in performance objectives to improve student learning.
	b. Various forms of practice are present and integrated with lesson components (pre-instruction, content, and assessment).	Various practice methods provide opportunities for students to master content. Practice is presented after pre-instructional activities and content but before assessment.
	c. Practice provides opportunity for timely and constructive feedback to facilitate learning.	For feedback to be constructive, instructor should provide neutral description of student performance and directions to correct performance.
Exceptional (Optional)		
Comments		

4.2 Assessment			
Minimum Standard(s)			
Α	NW NA	Standard	Criteria

	a. Assessments measure the stated learning objectives.	Assessments measure outcomes listed in performance objectives and guide the structure of learning activities to ensure student learning.
	b. Assessment methods are varied.	Assessments are ongoing and include a combination of assessment methods. Ex. objective testing, projects, papers, presentations etc.
	c. Clear and detailed instructions are provided to students before assessments are deployed.	To ensure student success, clear and detailed instructions are provided to students before assessments are deployed. Ex. grading rubrics, study guides etc.
	 Grading criteria is provided to students along with assessment instructions. 	To ensure student success, grading criteria is provided to students. Ex. grading rubrics
	e. Assessments use tools/settings to maximize the integrity of the assessments.	Assessments utilize appropriate software tools/settings to reduce technical problems and ensure exam security. Ex. randomize questions, lockdown browser, question banks, Turnitin, etc.
	f. Course uses authentic assessment methods when appropriate.	Assessments measure performance in practical contexts. Ex. case studies, solve problems that have real-world applications, journal critique, etc.
Exceptional (Optional)		
	g. Students are allowed to resubmit select assessments to demonstrate mastery.	Instructor provides multiple opportunities for students to master the content through re-submission of assessed materials based on feedback.
Comments		

4.3 Feedbac	4.3 Feedback			
Minimum St	Minimum Standard(s)			
A NW NA	Standard	Criteria		
	a. Feedback is consistently integrated into the course.	Instructor incorporates continuous feedback and guidance for all learning activities and assessments.		
	b. Instructor provides constructive feedback for all learning activities and assessments that need improvement.	For feedback to be constructive, instructor should provide neutral description of student performance and directions to correct performance.		
	c. Instructor provides feedback in a timely manner.	Feedback is most effective when provided immediately. In some instances, temporarily withholding feedback may be provided to allow the students to internalize and process the demands of the task.		
Exceptional	Exceptional (Optional)			
	d. Peer-to-peer feedback is included in course design.	Instructor provides opportunities for peer to peer interaction and ensures that peer feedback is constructive.		
Comments				

5.0 Interaction and Collaboration

In an online environment, meaningful interaction and collaborative learning promote a sense of community. This section covers standards for incorporating interaction and collaboration into online courses.

5.1	5.1 Interaction			
Mir	Minimum Standard(s)			
Α	NW NA	Standard	Criteria	

	a. Interaction promotes achievement of performance objectives.	Interactions are planned, purposeful, and meaningful in achieving learning outcomes.
	 b. Course uses synchronous/asynchronous communication tools to enhance learner interaction. 	Selection of synchronous/asynchronous communication tools is based upon type of activity, desired performance, target audience, and available resources. All required synchronous activity should be archived for later use.
	c. Course promotes various types of learner interaction.	Types of learner interaction include: learner-learner, learner-instructor, learner-content, learner-interface.
	d. Lecture presentations promote learner interaction.	Interactive features include practice w/feedback (ex. quiz, poll, knowledge check).
Comments		

5.2 Collaboration (Grouping)

Minimum Standard(s)			
A NW NA	Standard	Criteria	
	a. If group work is required, assigned group work is instructionally warranted.	Group composition yields the most effective outcome, based on the type of activity, and desired performance. The cumulative effort of the group is more valuable than individual work.	
	b. If group work is required, student expectations within groups are clearly communicated at the beginning of the group activity.	Expectations are clearly relayed (Ex. rubric) which describes details of final product, individual student contribution and participation.	
	c. Appropriate collaboration technologies are used to enhance the quality of group interaction.	Collaboration tools available in the LMS are used. Ex. Collaborate, Web 2.0 tools, Google Docs, EtherPad	
Exceptional	(Optional)		
	d. Group assignments are divided into smaller deliverables.	Instructor provides regular/intermittent feedback on group assignment deliverables.	
	e. Students are strategically placed into groups.	Instructor takes into consideration students' interests, location, strength and weakness to form groups.	
Comments			

6.0 Course Design

Sound design principles and techniques guide the development of a course that optimizes the learning/teaching environment. This section covers course organization, pacing, consistency and accuracy of content, visual design principles, usability guidelines, and course delivery.

6.1	6.1 Course Organization			
Mii	Minimum Standard(s)			
Α	NW NA	Standard	Criteria	
		 a. Course is organized into smaller units such as "lessons," or "modules." 	Course content is divided into meaningful lessons. Ex. weekly units, modules.	
		b. Each lesson includes five learning components.	Lessons include pre-instructional activity, content presentation, learner participation (practice and feedback), assessment and follow-through activities. (See also 3.1b)	

	c. Lessons are sequenced in logical order.	Lessons include learning components that are sequenced in logical order of complexity, topic and time.
Exceptional	(Optional)	
	d. Module/lesson design utilizes a template page to display all module/lesson content in a consolidated manner	Each module/lesson utilizes a template page where content will be displayed.
Comments		

6.2 Pacing	6.2 Pacing			
Minimum Sta	Minimum Standard(s)			
A NW NA	Standard	Criteria		
	a. Quantity of content is reasonable for credit hours, academic level and amount of time allocated for completion. (needs instructor's input)	All lesson components can be completed in the allotted period of time (3 hours of work for every credit hour per week).		
	b. Content is digitized and workload is reduced during the first week of class.	All content for first week is electronically available outside of Canvas and workload expectations are reduced due to add/drop week.		
Exceptional	(Optional)			
	c. Course is structured for accelerated learning	Adaptive learning technologies are used in course design to promote self-pacing.		
	d. Course materials are tagged for estimated completion times.	All course materials and learning activities are labeled for estimated completion times.		
Comments				

6.3 Consistency and Accuracy			
Minimum Standard(s)			
A NW NA	Standard	Criteria	
	a. Course terminology is consistent and accurate.	Consistent terminology is used to identify course elements throughout the course. Ex. lesson, assignment	
	b. Consistency in location and lesson structure for accessing course materials.	<i>Course materials are placed in a consistent location (course documents, exams) and presented in consistent structural framework. Ex. Read, view, do</i>	
	 c. Timely release of course materials as stated in course syllabus. 	Course information is released per the syllabus/schedule. Ex. Weekly lesson is released every Monday 8:00AM	
	d. Limited duplication of information within course website.	<i>Course design minimizes duplication of information in order to avoid errors. Ex. due dates, assignment instruction</i>	
	e. Course materials, dates, links reviewed for accuracy and consistency before deployment. (needs instructor's input)	Course instructor and designer reviews material for accuracy and consistency before it is available to students.	
Comments			

6.4 Visual Design and Usability

Mir	Minimum Standard(s)			
Α	NW NA	Standard	Criteria	
		a. COPH course template is applied indicating College branding elements.	See a sample of course with college branding elements	
		 b. Course begins with prescribed homepage to provide consistent start/launch. 	See a <u>sample of a course homepage</u>	
		c. Course shell displays unique professional banner.	See a <u>sample of a course banner</u>	
		d. Consistent and professional use of color, theme, graphics and resolution that reduce distraction to students.	Module/lesson page design is compliant with current web design standards. For example, Design uses concise text, minimizes scrolling, distinct headings, descriptive links	
		e. Navigation is intuitive and consistent throughout the course.	(not "click here") and clean layout that avoids information overload.	
		f. Font style, contrast and size formatted to enhance readability.	See COPH ETA visual design guidelines for online courses	
Comments				

6.5	6.5 Delivery			
Mir	Minimum Standard(s)			
Α	NW NA	Standard	Criteria	
		a. Course is primarily delivered in a web format.	All course information is digitized and available in web- based format (excluding supplemental materials).	
		b. Course uses USF content management system. (MyUSF/Canvas)	All course information is accessible through MyUSF/Canvas. Reusable content is posted in content collection or ETA server.	
Exc	ceptional	(Optional)		
		d. Course is mobile friendly.	Course elements are optimized and tested for delivery on mobile devices.	
Comments				

7.0 Accessibility

As articulated in USF System Policy 0-108 Disability and Accommodations (Public /Employees/Students), USF is committed to creating websites, electronic course content, or on-line learning environments that are inclusive and accessible to all users with disabilities. This section covers accommodations available for those students with disabilities.

7.1 Accommodations						
Minimum Standard(s)						
Α	NW NA	Standard	Criteria			
		a. All course content for the first three weeks meets all accessibility standards.	At a minimum, course content for the first three weeks include, Screen-readable PDFs, ALT tags for Images and closed caption and/or full text transcripts for multimedia materials (narrated PowerPoint lectures, videos, and audio).			
Exceptional (Optional)						

	b. All course content beyond the first three weeks accommodates the needs of students with disabilities.	Upon request from USF Student Disability Services all efforts are made to accommodate students with disabilities Ex. time extensions, transcripts, etc.			
Comments					

8.0 Course Evaluation

Course evaluations give students an opportunity to provide feedback and recommendations for future course improvements. All USF courses utilize eXplorance Blue, an online survey tool for course evaluations.

8.1	8.1 Course Evaluation					
Mir	Minimum Standard(s)					
Α	NW NA	Standard	Criteria			
		a. Course utilizes formative evaluations.	Instructor initiates ongoing formative evaluations that provide feedback for continuous course improvement. (for ex. rate this lesson, mid-term evaluations, focus groups).			
Exceptional (Optional)						
		b. Course integrates USF course evaluation results.	Results from previous USF course evaluations are taken into consideration when revising the course.			
		c. Course integrates formative evaluation results when warranted.	When warranted, results from course formative evaluations are used to make ongoing revisions.			
Со	mments					

Acknowledgements

This document is created by the USF COPH Office of Educational Technology and Assessment (ETA) and is a revision/update of the USF COPH Minimum Standards (Version 2) which was developed by the Innovations in Technology and Teaching (ITT) Congressional Award and ETA in 2005. This document has been approved by ETA Advisory Committee. In creating this document ETA has referred to and would like to acknowledge the following course standards:

- USF COPH Minimum Standards (Version 1. and 2.)
- USF Lakeland Online Course Evaluation Checklist
- The Quality Matters Rubric Standards, Fifth edition, 2014
- Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Standards for Quality Online Teaching
- Blackboard 2008 Greenhouse Exemplary Course Evaluation Rubric

Document on the ETA website under Faculty Resources at: <u>http://health.usf.edu/publichealth/eta/</u> Please direct any questions to ETA via email at <u>eta@health.usf.edu</u> or via phone at 813-974-6666.