



D2L Course Design Guidelines

— A D2L Course Design Training is also available for [self-enrollment in D2L](#). —

About the D2L Course Design Guidelines

The D2L Course Design Guidelines are a resource to assist instructors with the development of quality learning experiences to create alignment between all course elements, support students' diverse learning needs, and cultivate an equitable and inclusive learning environment.

D2L Course Design Guidelines Sections

The Guidelines focus on course elements, organized into 10 sections, as follows:

1. [Student Learning Outcomes](#)
2. [Assessment Evidence/Learning Experiences](#)
3. [Universal Design for Learning and Accessibility](#)
4. [Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging](#)
5. [D2L Course Shell Setup and Layout](#)
6. [Course Overview and Introduction](#)
7. [Facilitation and Instruction](#)
8. [Interaction, Communication, Engagement](#)
9. [Course Technology and Tools](#)
10. [Course Summary and Wrap-Up](#)

Rating Scale

- Use the [rating scale](#) to:
 - **For Faculty-** Self-assess each item to identify strengths and areas for improvement.
 - **For Peer/Admin Reviewers-** Provide feedback to faculty. Items rated *developing (1)* or *deficient (0)* should include feedback in the form of an explanation and recommendations for improvement.

1. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Set by Departments, course SLOs are essential to planning a course. The course SLOs provide guidance for the development of all course elements, including assessments, learning activities, pedagogies, and other course materials. **Note: Course Student Learning Outcomes are set by Departments and should not be altered.**

Item	Description	Rating
	Before the Course Starts	
1.1	Review the course Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for relevancy and current alignment to the course content and materials.	Select
1.2	Ensure that the SLOs are observable and measurable, meaning students can demonstrate the SLOs in the course, and it is possible to assess a student demonstrating that learning.	Select
1.3	Create enabling objectives (module/weekly/unit objectives), ensuring they directly support and align with one or more SLO.	Select
1.4	Verify all course materials and resources align with and support one or more SLO.	Select
1.5	Confirm all SLOs are being assessed, and at an appropriate cognitive level for the course (Bloom's Taxonomy).	Select
1.6	Incorporate diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB) into SLOs and enabling objectives to ensure a welcoming and affirming learning environment for all students.	Select

2. Assessment Evidence/Learning Experiences

Assessments should align with and support one or more Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). Learning experiences should provide students with a variety of opportunities to practice learning and comprehension.

Item	Description	Rating
Before the Course Starts		
2.1	Include a variety of formative and summative assessments and learning experiences.	Select
2.2	Apply Universal Design for Learning (UDL) guidelines to course assessments and learning experiences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can you make assessments and learning experiences more flexible? UDL encourages instructors to provide the parameters and requirements of an assignment but allow students the flexibility to select the method and means in which to showcase learning. • Can larger assessments and learning experiences be broken down into smaller chunks? Scaffold larger, required projects into lower-stakes learning experiences. 	Select
2.3	Where appropriate, use a combination of synchronous and asynchronous assignments and activities.	Select
Throughout the Course		
2.4	Incorporate a variety of assessment methods.	Select
2.5	Provide clear, detailed instructions for course assignments and learning experiences.	Select
2.6	Provide grading rubrics/checklists for assignments and activities.	Select
2.7	Provide opportunities for students to reflect on their learning throughout the course (Blogs, Journals, Surveys etc.).	Select

3. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Accessibility

Evaluate all elements of the course for potential barriers that could impede a student from reaching their full potential. Incorporate [UDL Guidelines](#) and [LCC's Accessibility Guidelines](#) during the course design process, as opposed to an afterthought.

Item	Description	Rating
Before Course Starts		
3.1	Incorporate UDL principles into the design and development of course curriculum, assessments, and pedagogical methods to proactively remove potential barriers. UDL principles encourage instructors to design for diverse learners by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Incorporating intentional flexibility to support strengths and needs. ● Anticipating and removing potential barriers. 	Select
3.2	Proactively support a range of learning preferences for diverse learners by providing students with multiple means of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engagement - how students will interact with the Instructor, course content, and classmates. ● Representation - how students will perceive and comprehend. ● Action & Expression - how students will express their understanding. 	Select
3.3	Review all course materials and resources for potential barriers and accessibility issues. See LCC's Accessibility Guidelines for a complete list of accessibility guidelines. Some examples of course materials and resources are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Instructor created materials - Word docx, PDFs, PPTs, HTML web pages, and MP4 (video/audio). ● Third-party content - Publisher created materials/textbooks. ● External links - Websites, and YouTube videos. 	Select
3.4	Keep course files in their native formats where possible. (i.e. Word documents are kept as Word documents; not saved as a PDF.)	Select
3.5	Review the Ally Course Accessibility Report in D2L to ensure that materials available in D2L are at the light or dark green accessibility indicator (67% or higher).	Select
3.6	If possible, break long video files (20 minutes or longer) into smaller chunks by creating a part 1 and part 2.	Select
Throughout the Course		
3.7	Review and update course files identified on the Ally Course Accessibility Report in D2L to ensure materials are accessible for students.	Select

4. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB)

Approach course design with diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging at the center of the design process. Work to develop a course and learning environment that is welcoming and accepting by considering the unique needs and life experiences of all students.

Item	Description	Rating
Before Course Starts		
4.1	Review course policies and expectations for equity and inclusivity. Consider reviewing policies such as Late Submissions, Due Dates, and Quiz/Test parameters.	Select
4.2	Review existing course resources and materials for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diversity- Do course resources and materials (images, videos, examples, support material) represent diverse populations? ● Equity - Does the course work towards minimizing or eliminating barriers and bias? ● Inclusion- Does the course work to establish a welcoming learning environment where all students feel invited, respected, and supported? ● Belonging- Does the course cultivate a safe, inclusive learning environment where all feel included, accepted, and valued? 	Select
4.3	Reimagine course content. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diversify readings and materials in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, political viewpoint, and nationality. 	Select
Additional DEIB items are located throughout the guidelines:		
4.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Section 1 - Item 1.6 ● Section 2 - Items 2.2, 2.4 ● Section 3 - Items 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 ● Section 5- Item 5.11 ● Section 6- Items 6.6, 6.7 ● Section 7 - Items 7.1, 7.4 ● Section 8 - Items 8.1, 8.4, 8.11 ● Section 9 - Item 9.1 ● Section 10 - Item 10.1 	

5. D2L Course Shell Setup and Layout

Build the course in D2L, focusing on organization, consistency, and clarity. It is strongly recommended to build the entire course prior to the first day of the course to allow time to reflect and review the course as a whole.

Item	Description	Rating
	Before Course Starts	
5.1	Provide a Start Here/Getting Started module.	Select
5.2	Ensure the D2L course layout is logical, organized and consistent. Use weeks, modules, units to organize materials.	Select
5.3	Place all materials needed for a week/module/unit in one location (i.e. the Week 1 folder contains all materials needed to complete Week 1).	Select
5.4	Set up the D2L course shell to mirror existing course documents (i.e. Concourse Syllabus, Course Schedule), and to allow students to make connections between course documents and materials.	Select
5.5	Set up the D2L gradebook with all graded components of the course, ensuring items in the gradebook have titles and points that align with corresponding items in other areas of the course.	Select
5.6	Set the D2L gradebook to Release Final Calculated grades so students can track their progress from the start.	Select
5.7	Set the D2L gradebook to " drop ungraded items " to show students their current grade based on the graded items to date.	Select
5.8	Ensure all information in the D2L course shell is accurate, including instructor information, dates, course materials, etc.	Select
5.9	Review the D2L course shell for duplicated content, broken links, and outdated materials.	Select
5.10	Label optional/supplemental course content and materials.	Select
5.11	Review course materials for diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB), Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and Accessibility.	Select

Item	Description	Rating
5.12	View the course from a student role to ensure the desired items are available or unavailable to students.	Select
5.13	Verify the course does not exceed the 700MB Course Size Limit Procedure .	Select

6. Course Overview and Introduction

Create a welcoming, respectful learning environment by connecting with students and sharing your commitment to support diverse learning needs. Provide important course information on the official first day of the course.

Item	Description	Rating
	Before the Course Starts	
6.1	Update the Concourse Syllabus to reflect the current semester.	Select
6.2	Personalize the Course Information Template located within D2L Content.	Select
	On the First Official Day (Course Start)	
6.3	Post a <i>Welcome to the Course</i> announcement on the first day of class.	Select
6.4	Send a <i>Welcome to the Course</i> email to students on the first day of class.	Select
6.5	Provide a Course Schedule. View the example Course Schedule . Please save a copy to create a version specific to your course.	Select
	During the First Week	
6.6	Create a welcoming learning environment by building connections, maintaining open communication, and considering the individual needs of each student.	Select
6.7	Get to know students by providing an activity to learn more about their expectations, unique needs, and life experiences. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an activity, such as a survey, discussion, email, etc. View a sample Getting to Know You Survey, or create your own. 	Select

7. Facilitation and Instruction

Incorporate a variety of teaching strategies and styles to support students in their diverse learning needs. Facilitation and instruction should aim to foster student-centered learning by encouraging students to be active participants in their own learning.

Item	Description	Rating
	Before Course Starts	
7.1	Plan to support diverse learners by selecting a variety of teaching strategies to use throughout the course.	Select
7.2	Select teaching strategies and styles that support the course assessments/learning experiences, and the overall Student Learning Outcomes.	Select
	Throughout the Course	
7.3	Deliver course content using a variety of methods including lectures, weekly readings, labs, worksheets, discussions, multimedia, demonstrations.	Select
7.4	Incorporate Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles into course facilitation and instruction to account for learner variability.	Select

8. Interaction, Communication, and Engagement

Provide multiple opportunities for students to engage throughout the course. Plan regular interactions with students using a variety of means to reach all students.

Item	Description	Rating
	Before Course Starts	
8.1	Identify the opportunities throughout the course that will support the following engagement types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor-Student engagement • Student-Student engagement • Student-Content engagement 	Select
8.2	Create a communication plan by determining when and how you will communicate with students.	Select
	Throughout the Course	
8.3	Communicate with students by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sending emails. • Posting course announcements. • Reaching out to students individually. • Responding to and engaging different students on each discussion topic. 	Select
8.4	Model respectful interactions and communication.	Select
8.5	Monitor and actively participate in online discussions (both written and oral).	Select
8.6	Provide useful, timely feedback on course assignments and activities.	Select
8.7	Provide multiple opportunities for students to receive feedback throughout the course.	Select
8.8	Provide multiple opportunities for students to provide feedback about the course. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-in with students throughout the course using private emails, surveys, etc. 	Select
8.9	Engage students using a variety of methods, technologies, and formats.	Select
8.10	Provide opportunities for group work/collaboration.	Select

Item	Description	Rating
8.11	Create a community of engaged students by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making connections with students. • Being enthusiastic and passionate about the course. • Building trust. • Modeling empathy, kindness, and compassion. • Empowering students through strengths. • Considering how students best learn. • Welcoming mistakes as part of the learning process. (Sochacki, 2020)	Select

9. Course Technology and Tools

Incorporate a variety of technology tools to deliver course content, engage students in learning, and demonstrate student learning. Ensure that all technologies align with and support the student learning and the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs).

Item	Description	Rating
	Before Course Starts	
9.1	Select appropriate technologies, tools, and media to deliver course content that supports the SLOs.	Select
9.2	Verify required software has been vetted by LCC's ITS Department, and is on the approved software list .	Select
	Throughout the Course	
9.3	Use selected technologies, tools and media to engage and support student learning throughout the course.	Select
9.4	Use LCC's media platform, Kaltura, to embed video files into D2L courses.	Select

10. Course Summary and Wrap-Up

Provide opportunities for students to reflect on their learning, their strengths and weaknesses, and the overall course. Take time, after the course ends, to reflect on the course design and delivery; aiming for continuous improvement.

Item	Description	Rating
Near the End of the Course		
10.1	<p>Include opportunities for students to reflect on the semester. These opportunities can look and feel very different from course to course but may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written, video, or audio reflections. • Suggested readings and resources for the future. • Student surveys for specific course feedback. • Creative closure activities. • Online review sessions. 	Select
Before the Last Day of the Course		
10.2	Provide students with feedback about their overall learning and progress in the course.	Select
10.3	Encourage students to complete the course evaluation.	Select
10.4	Ensure grades and feedback for all course assignments, as well as the overall grade in the course are viewable in the D2L gradebook.	Select
After the Course has Ended		
10.5	<p>Reflect on the content and facilitation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What worked? • What didn't work? • Are there areas or items that can be improved upon? • What would you like to try next time? • How can you improve the overall accessibility of the course and course materials? • How can DEIB be enhanced throughout the course? • Can you implement additional UDL principles in the future? 	Select
10.6	<p>Evaluate for effectiveness of course assessments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize the built-in D2L Reporting and Statistical tools to make data-driven decisions. 	Select

Rating Scale for Self-Assessment and Peer/Admin Reviewers

- **For Faculty-** Use the rating scale to self-assess each item to identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- **For Peer/Admin Reviewers-** Use the rating scale to provide feedback to faculty. Items rated **developing (1)** or **deficient (0)** should include feedback in the form of an explanation and recommendations for improvement.

Rating	Rating Description
3- Exemplary	The course addresses the item in an exceptional way.
2- Accomplished	The course addresses the item.
1- Developing	The course attempts to address the item, but it is incomplete, in-progress, or needs attention.
0- Deficient	The course fails to address the item and/or the item is missing.
Not Applicable	The items are not applicable to the course.

References

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Sochacki, J. (2020, March 23). *A Checklist for Building Community in the College*

Classroom. Faculty Focus. <https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/effective-classroom-management/a-checklist-for-building-community-in-the-college-classroom/>.

[Nondiscrimination](#)