

Best Practices of Online Pedagogy

Course Syllabus and Schedule of Graded Activities

CSCU Community Colleges

Semester:

CRN:

Facilitators:

Participants: Please review the information in this Syllabus carefully. You are responsible for checking this document for due dates, grading policies, assignment expectations, etc.

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How to Earn the iTeach Certificate

The iTeach Certificate has two required components (*you do not have to complete them in this order*):

- Completion of this 6-week facilitated Best Practices of Online Pedagogy course
- Completion of the Five Technical Badges (Blackboard Competency Demonstration)

For information about the certificate requirements please visit: <https://ct.edu/iteach>

Course Syllabus

Course Description

This is an intensive fully online 6-week course that is one part of the requirements of the iTeach Certificate. It focuses on online pedagogy and topics that are paramount to facilitating online learning such as: adapting instruction to the online environment, defining learning outcomes and objectives, creating a navigable course structure, designing for inclusiveness and accessibility, assessing and grading, aligning and evaluating content, and building online communities. This course was developed by the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) system.

Prerequisites

Prior experience having taught a hybrid or fully online course in a learning management system is certainly helpful, but not required.

Textbook

There is no required textbook for this course

General Expectations

The outline and structure of this course create a set of common expectations for your work. Please keep current in class. Learners who fall behind are less likely to get feedback from others in online discussions. If something happens that is going to cause you to fall behind, it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to contact your instructor immediately.

Course Objectives/Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to design an instructionally-sound online course. Specifically, you will be able to:

- Identify the differences and similarities between an online course and an on-ground course and will be able to identify teaching strategies that may be uniquely appropriate in an online environment.
- Identify teaching strategies that may be uniquely appropriate in an online environment.

- Write clear student learning outcomes for your course and align them with the activities and assessments in your course.
- Create a course organizational structure that will simplify navigation, facilitate learning, and support student-student and student-instructor interaction.
- Identify a variety of resources for both content and activities that can be included in your course to help your learners meet learning outcomes.
- Design course content and activities using information design techniques that enhance student comprehension and retention.
- Organize course content and activities using information design techniques that enhance student comprehension and retention.
- Identify various techniques to ensure an appropriate level of communication and interaction.
- Apply design and support strategies that will help your students succeed as online learners.
- Plan engaging collaborative learning activities within your course.
- Discuss various assessment, feedback, grading strategies - including traditional assessments, authentic assessments, and rubrics - and how to employ them in an online course.

Faculty Office Hours and Contact Information

Office hours:
by Appointment

Location:
Virtual Office Hours in WebEx

Contact Information: All personal correspondence will be via **Messages** in Blackboard

Late Work and Participation Policies

- Work is not accepted past the deadlines posted in the course *Schedule of Graded Activities*.
Work submitted late will automatically receive zero (0) points.
- In the event of a missed deadline due to illness or emergency:
 - The expectation is that you will contact the instructor either on the date of the missed submission or the day after, except for truly serious emergencies.
 - If you do not request a rescheduled date to submit the required work due to illness or emergency, the instructor will not offer one and you will be awarded a zero.
- There is no opportunity for extra credit.

The bottom line: You earn the grade you get in this course. You are responsible for turning your work in on time. You are responsible for maintaining the quality of the work that will earn you a good grade.

Participation

BPOP requires that participants engage within the first twelve (12) days of the start of each class. Students who do not engage in the course within this time frame will receive an “N” for non-participation and will not be permitted to enroll in a future session for 3 months. Requests for withdrawal will not be granted after the first twelve (12) days – **last day to withdraw XXX**.

Schedule of Graded Activities

Availability and Due Dates (all times EST)

- Each discussion is worth 100 points (50 points Initial Post; 50 points Reply to another participant)
- Each Backward Design Worksheet is worth 40 points. These are submitted weekly beginning in Unit 2.
- There is one assignment due at the end of the course, worth 200 points - Final Reflection Paper).
- To pass the course, participants need to get 900 out of 1000 points. This is a Pass/Fail course.

Unit or Assignment	<u>Due every Wednesday:</u> Discussion Initial Post	<u>Due every Wednesday:</u> Backward Design Worksheet (Units 2-6)	<u>Due every Sunday:</u> Discussion Reply to another participant
Getting Started	<i>opens Thurs. XX 12:01 am (NOTE: Sat. XX is the official start date of the course)</i>		
Introductions Disc (ungraded)	Wed. XX 11:59 pm	N/A	N/A
Unit 1 <i>opens after syllabus quiz completed</i>	Wed. XX 11:59 pm	N/A	Sun. XX 11:59 pm
Unit 2 <i>opens Fri. XX 12:01 am</i>	Wed. XX 11:59 pm	Wed. XX 11:59 pm	Sun. XX 11:59 pm
Unit 3 <i>opens Fri. XX 12:01 am</i>	Wed. XX 11:59 pm	Wed. XX 11:59 pm	Sun. XX 11:59 pm
Unit 4 <i>opens Fri. XX 12:01 am</i>	Wed. XX 11:59 pm	Wed. XX 11:59 pm	Sun. XX 11:59 pm
Unit 5 <i>opens Fri. XX 12:01 am</i>	Wed. XX 11:59 pm	Wed. XX 11:59 pm	Sun. XX 11:59 pm
Unit 6 <i>opens Fri. XX 12:01 am</i>	Wed. XX 11:59 pm	Wed. XX 11:59 pm	Sun. XX 11:59 pm
Final Course Survey and Reflection Paper Assignment	The link to the survey and the Reflection Paper assignment will be become available at the same time as Unit 6 on the Course Content page. <i>(Revised Submissions of the Backward Design Worksheet are also due this date – you do not need to resubmit if no changes were made)</i>		Sun. 11:59 pm

Grading

Assignment Name:	Initial Post	Reply Post	Points Possible:
Unit 1 Discussion	50 points	50 points	100 points
Unit 2 Discussion	50 points	50 points	100 points
Unit 3 Discussion	50 points	50 points	100 points
Unit 4 Discussion	50 points	50 points	100 points
Unit 5 Discussion	50 points	50 points	100 points
Unit 6 Discussion	50 points	50 points	100 points
Backward Design Worksheet (40 points each - Units 2 - 6)			200 points REQUIRED to pass the course
Course survey			Ungraded but REQUIRED
Final Reflection Paper			200 points REQUIRED to pass the course
TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE			1000 Points
TOTAL POINTS REQUIRED TO PASS THE COURSE			900 Points

Rubrics

Each work component has an associated rubric – Discussions, the Backward Design Worksheet, and the Final Reflection Paper. Rubrics help to ensure consistency and equity in grading and also serve to provide students with clear expectations for the given assignment. The rubrics used in BPOP are simplified, but rubrics can be built out to have multiple components and levels of achievement.

Make sure you Review and Understand the Rubric expectations before submitting work.

Unit Outcomes

Unit 1: Intro to Online Learning and Teaching: Upon completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe how the OSCQR Rubric will be used to review your course
- Identify essential elements of an online course syllabus
- Compare traditional and online teaching and learning
- Describe key findings in the field of learning, both online and traditional
- Attune to the needs, backgrounds, and expectations of potential learners that will lead to modification of instructional methods
- Identify essential learning theory principles that guide online course design and teaching practices
- Evaluate the design attributes of online courses to help inform your own online course design

Unit 2: Course Organization and Navigation: Upon completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the Backward Design process
- Explain how Backward Design is useful in course development and planning
- Create SMART (specific, measurable, learner-centered) course objectives that allow the instructor to determine what students know and are able to demonstrate
- Incorporate best practices of course navigation, organization, and instructional sequencing into your course planning and design process

Unit 3: Universal Design and Accessibility: Upon completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- Predict challenges and barriers for students with various disabilities in an online course
- Identify faculty responsibilities associated with civil rights laws for students with disabilities in higher education
- Identify Classroom barriers
- Proactively design courses and course content with accessibility in mind
- Select accessible course content for mobile and online courses
- Create accessible course content for mobile and online courses

Unit 4: Assessment and Grading: Upon completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- Distinguish various methods of assessment
- Discuss methods of providing distinct grading and descriptive feedback
- Examine rubrics to identify critical components of assessment to discriminate levels of proficiency

Unit 5: Evaluating Course Content and Activities: Upon completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- Evaluate which content sources and methods of content delivery ensure students meet course learning objectives
- Design engaging and varied activities that align with course learning objectives
- Evaluate various technological tools to determine which align with assessment methods to meet course learning objectives

Unit 6: Building Communities Online: Upon completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe elements of an effective online communication plan
- Describe approaches to initiate and manage discussions and roles an instructor plays
- Outline strategies to build a sense of community in the online classroom
- Identify ways to increase sense of instructor presence in the online classroom
- Apply essential elements needed to support learners in an online environment

Course Work Details and Expectations

Discussions - (100 points per Unit) 600 points total

- The **Initial Post** in response to the unit discussion prompt questions will always be due on Wednesday of each week at 11:59 PM EST (50 points).
 - Your initial posts are expected to be around 350 words, not including the prompt questions. The maximum number of words is 500, so be concise!
 - Make sure to answer all prompts to receive your 50 points for Initial Posts. To be considered 'substantive', your post must reference specific content from your readings and what you would do differently in your present course now that you have reviewed Unit materials.
 - If your initial post contains any unattributed content from another participant's post, you will receive zero points. Your facilitator(s) will inform you through the Messages/Email tool if they see that this has happened.
- A **Reply** to at least one other participant's initial discussion post (i.e. in which they respond to the discussion prompt questions) will always be due the following Sunday of that same week, also at 11:59 PM EST (50 points).
 - Click the REPLY button to respond to someone else's discussion post.
 - Your reply is expected to be a minimum of 100 words, not including quotes from other participants.
 - Your reply is expected to reference specific content in the thread that resonated with you, challenged your thinking, requires further clarification or which relates to what you have written about; something you learned from a post, or how you may incorporate something into your teaching.
 - If your reply to one other participant contains any unattributed content from another participant's post, you will receive zero points for that week. Your facilitator(s) will inform you through the Messages/Email tool if they see that this has happened.
 - *Note: A reply to a post that a facilitator puts up in the forum does NOT count as your gradable reply to another participant's initial post, but you are encouraged to respond to facilitator posts as well.*

To become familiar with how the Blackboard Discussions tool works, please watch this short video: [Use Discussions in the Original Course View](#)

You must post BOTH the initial post in response to the discussion prompts (Wednesday) AND a reply to at least one other person (Sunday) by each of the specified deadlines to earn 100 points for the Unit's Discussion (50 Points for the Initial Post and 50 Points for the Reply Posts).

To further help you understand what would be considered substantive, each discussion forum uses a grading rubric. The use of a discussion rubric is a best practice that we highly recommend you adopt in your own online discussions.

To view the grading rubric for each gradable discussion:

- Go to Discussions
 1. Click on the title of the forum (e.g. Unit 2 Discussion)
 2. Click the "Grading Information" button at the top of the forum page
 3. Click the icon (six-square tile in the pink *GRADE* field) to open and view the rubric
- The rubric is comprised of the elements which are essential to starting and maintaining a conversation and exchanging ideas around the posted prompts and Unit's topics.
- Most Unit Discussion prompts contain multiple questions. Be sure to copy each prompt question into your reply and respond to each one individually when you create your Initial Post.

Discussion Etiquette

We are committed to open, frank, and insightful dialogue in this course. Diversity has many manifestations, including diversity of thought, opinion, and values. We encourage all learners to be respectful of that diversity and to refrain from inappropriate commentary. If inappropriate comments occur, the instructor(s) will intervene as they monitor the dialogue in the course. The instructor(s) will request that inappropriate content be removed from the course and will recommend institutional disciplinary action. Learners as well as faculty should be guided by common sense and basic etiquette.

Why are the Unit Discussions not editable?

With the exception of the "Introductions" forum, discussion board forums are not editable in BPOP. This is intentional because there are a few things we want faculty to think about when they set up their own discussion forums. There is no single correct way to set this up. This will be faculty preference while considering the following:

1. Students, if given the ability to edit posts, can simply post their response to the prompt and enter a post that might not meet the requirements by the due date. If the faculty member is not monitoring these posts, the student can alter that post to meet the requirements after the due date, or after they've read the posts of their classmates.
2. As noted, student experience in Bb is often different from faculty experience. It is important to have this perspective as you make choices on what settings to use (or not use).

We recommend participants work in MS Word or another word processing application to draft their posts and responses prior to submitting them in Blackboard. One reason for this is that the spelling and grammar checker in MS Word is more robust than the one in Blackboard.

Additionally, doing this serves as a best practice in modeling the approach of drafting and saving your work offline for future reference. Be sure to select **“Remove Formatting”** when copying and pasting from another source into Blackboard.

Please watch this video for more information: A good resource to review is the **“Using the Spellchecker in Blackboard versus MS Word”** video: <https://youtu.be/4xWkbuZ7LQg>

Backward Design Worksheet – (40 points each in Units 2 - 6) 200 points

This assignment requires you to submit a Unit-by-Unit version of the Backward Design Worksheet. Each Unit’s assignment is worth 40 points (200 total). In Unit 6 only, you will be given two attempts in case the grading of the first attempt is asking for changes or updates. Facilitator-provided feedback for changes in one Unit must be reflected in each future Unit’s chart. **A rubric is provided with the criteria upon which the assignment will be assessed.**

Final Reflection Paper Assignment – 200 points

This assignment requires you to write a short paper, responding to four specific questions. **A rubric is provided with the criteria upon which the assignment will be assessed.**

You cannot pass the course without submitting this document, and it MUST be submitted as an attachment to the assignment.

The following will be considered in grading these papers:

- Full responses to each of the numbered prompt questions.
- Remember that the total length of your responses is expected to be 1000-1200 words, not including the prompt questions.
- Demonstrated understanding of the concepts covered in the course.
- Inclusion of detail and examples demonstrating depth of reflection.
- **The paper must be submitted as an attachment to the assignment, as per the detailed instructions provided.** Please let your instructor(s) know if you experience any issues submitting via the Assignment link – submissions will only be accepted through that link. You will receive a confirmation when Blackboard has received your work.
- Please note that instructors have two weeks after the Reflection paper submission deadline to read, comment on, and grade participants’ papers.
- **Reflection Paper Assignment will open with the Unit 6 contents.**

General Posting Etiquette

The following are good guidelines to follow:

- ✗ Never post, transmit, promote, or distribute content that is known to be illegal.
- ✗ Never post harassing, threatening, or embarrassing comments.
- ✗ If you disagree with someone, respond to the subject, not the person.
- ✗ Never post content that is harmful, abusive, racially, ethnically, or religiously offensive
- ✗ Never post content that is vulgar; sexually explicit, or otherwise potentially offensive.

Academic Honesty

All online participants are expected to conform to the accepted standards of academic honesty. Any clear violations of these standards, such as cheating, violating copyright laws, or plagiarism are handled promptly, firmly, privately, and fairly by the instructor.

Plagiarism

The **American Heritage Dictionary** defines plagiarism as "To appropriate passages or ideas from another and use them as one's own."

Plagiarism involves:

- Submitting another person's work as one's own
- Submitting work from any source that is not properly acknowledged by footnote, bibliography, or reference within a paper
- Submitting work pieced together from phrases and/or sentences from various sources without acknowledgement
- Submitting work with another person's phrase(s) rearranged without acknowledgement
- Submitting work that uses any phrase, sentence, or stylistic mannerism without acknowledgement
- Omitting quotation marks from any directly quoted material
- Failure to use three dots (...) to indicate omission of one or more words
- Any other actions deemed to be plagiarism by the faculty

Participants with Disabilities

Important note: The following statement has been adopted as a universal syllabus statement for all community colleges, and must appear in the course syllabi for all community college courses with the college information, starting in Fall 2020:

Students with Disabilities (including short-term impairments): If you are a student with a documented disability and you believe you will need accommodations or academic adjustments for this class, it is your responsibility to contact the Office of Disability Services. To avoid any delay in receipt of accommodations or academic adjustments, you should contact the Office of Disability Services as soon as possible. In response to your request, the Office of Disability Services may ask you to provide supporting medical documentation, diagnostic test results or professional prescriptions to evaluate your request for the accommodations or academic adjustments.

The Office of Disability Services may also obtain its own professional determination of whether specific requested accommodations or academic adjustments are necessary. Please note that accommodations or academic adjustments cannot be provided until approved and an accommodation letter from the Office of Disability Services has been received by faculty and student. If you experience a temporary impairment, medical condition, or are pregnant, and it interferes with your schoolwork, contact the Office of Disability Services.