

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, textbook information, etc.

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Part I: Course Syllabus

How to Earn the iTeach Certificate

Earning the **iTeach Certificate** has several requirements.

- One is completion of a 6-week facilitated **Best Practices of Online Pedagogy** course.
- Other requirements are badges associated with demonstrations of technical competencies.
- For information about the certificate requirements please visit: <https://ct.edu/iteach>

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

- Anyone who is considering teaching a fully-online course should already possess a fundamental set of technological competencies, such as the ability to upload/download documents, organize their computer's files and folders, attach content to emails, do effective Internet searches, understand how to use a web browser, navigate to specific URLs, etc. If you are not certain if you have the fundamental skillset, we recommend that you have a chat with your local director of educational technology to get their input and advice.
- You have a basic familiarity with how to use and navigate the Bb Learn interface by having used it to "web-enhance" an on-ground classroom based course, OR you have a solid technical foundation in a comparable learning management system.
- 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. Here are some general considerations the College wishes to emphasize:

- 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 in order to 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 and be able to 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, and grading strategies--including traditional assessments, authentic assessments, and rubrics--and understand how to create and employ them in an online course.

Faculty Office Hours and Contact Information

Office hours (On-Campus or online via WebEx)

by Appointment

Locations

Virtual Office Hours in my WebEx Personal Meeting Room

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

Course Grading Overview

- Grading will be based on discussion posts and on the required submission of the final reflective paper assignment.

- Detailed instructions for unit discussion grading are included in the “Getting Started” unit in Blackboard.
- At the end of the course, there are two required activities:
 1. **A brief course survey.**
 - If you do not complete this survey, the *Final Reflective Paper Assignment* will not be released to you (adaptive release settings are being used to release the final assignment based upon completion of the survey).
 2. **Final Reflective Paper Assignment.**
 - This assignment requires you to write a short paper, responding to specific questions.
 - You cannot pass the course without submitting this document, and it MUST be submitted as an attachment to the assignment.
 - Specific instructions for how to do this are provided in the assignment—follow them carefully!
- All deliverables are due on a week-by-week basis, as specified in the **Schedule of Graded Activities** at the end of this Syllabus.

Grading Policies

Each discussion is worth 100 points. The final reflection assignment is worth 400 points. To pass the course, participants need to get 900 out of 1000 points. This is a Pass/Fail course.

- Work is not accepted past the deadlines posted in the course *Schedule of Graded Activities*. **Work submitted late will automatically receive zero (0) points.**
 - PLEASE REVIEW Part II: Schedule of Graded Activities for all due dates.
- 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 two weeks 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.

Course Discussions

Writing Your Discussion Post:

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>

Discussions: Deadlines and Grading

- Elements of a substantive initial post **must** include:
 - An original initial post expected to be a minimum of 350 words, not including the prompt questions, or quotes from other participants.
 - References to specific content that resonated with you, which relates to what you are writing about
 - Concrete examples of SLOs, activities, assessments, experiences, etc. that relate to the either things you have tried in your classes in the past, are using now, or think you MAY use in a future class.
 - Ideas about how they could apply what they have learned in the Unit, something they learned from someone else’s post, or perhaps how they might update or enhance something they are already doing.

- Elements of a substantive response **may** include:
 - Reply is insightful and includes some “out of the box” thinking, is thorough and interesting.
 - Your response 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.
 - A reply is expected to be a minimum of 100 words, not including the prompt questions or quotes from other participants.
- To further help you understand what would be considered substantive, each discussion forum uses a grading rubric. Although we are not grading according to this rubric in this course, we are modeling it so you can see as a student how a discussion rubric is used and how it is displayed to students. 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, do the following:**
 1. Go to the Discussions tool.
 2. Click on the title of the forum
 3. Click the "Grading Information" button at the top of the forum page
 4. Click the icon to open and view the rubric.
- Most, if not all, discussion prompts will contain multiple questions. Be sure to copy each prompt question into your reply and respond to each one individually when you post your initial thread.
- Grading for the unit discussions is "all or nothing," meaning no partial credit is awarded. You must post BOTH the initial thread in response to the discussion prompts (Wednesday), AND a reply to at least one other person by each of the specified deadlines (Sunday). If you fail to do so you will receive a zero for that week's discussion.

Rationale for "All or Nothing" Discussion Grading

- Requiring separate posting deadlines is a very common strategy for facilitating discussions in online courses, and this is why we are modeling them.
- Separate deadlines ensure that there is a viable and engaged discussion by participants. If we didn't require the initial posts by mid-week, people might have nothing to reply to until the following weekend. And if we didn't require replies by a certain deadline, people may not bother to reflect on and respond to the posts of others.

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 will intervene as they monitor the dialogue in the course. The instructor 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. 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.

Final Required Reflective Paper 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.** Failure to do so will result in failing the course. Do NOT attach the paper to a discussion post, email it, or send it via Message.
- Please note that instructors have two weeks after the reflective paper submission deadline to read, comment on, and grade participants' papers.
- **Reflective Paper Assignment with open once the course survey has been completed.**

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.

Cheating

Cheating shall be defined as:

- Copying to any extent the work of another participant.

Plagiarism and the Use of Anti-Plagiarism Software in this Course

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

Notice: Anti-plagiarism Detection Software (all CCC faculty should include this in their syllabi) SafeAssign, TurnItIn or other anti-plagiarism detection software products may be used in this course. Anti-plagiarism detection software products assist faculty and students in preventing and detecting plagiarism. Professors may utilize such software to check the originality of the academic work students submit in a course by comparing submitted papers to those contained in its database consisting of submitted papers and other sources. Anti-plagiarism detection software returns an "originality report" for each submission. The report is limited in scope to merely identifying passages that are not original to the author of the submitted work and which may include correctly cited quotations and information. Professors and students must carefully review such reports. No adverse action may be taken by a professor with respect to a student solely on the basis of an originality report which indicates the potential plagiarism.

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 _____ at [DSP/PHONE/EMAIL]. To avoid any delay in receipt of accommodations or academic adjustments, you should contact the Office of _____ as soon as possible. In response to your request, the Office of _____ 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 _____ 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 _____ has been received by faculty and student. If you experience a temporary impairment, medical condition, [or are pregnant,] and it interferes with your schoolwork, call (DSP/PHONE/EMAIL).

Part II: Schedule of Graded Activities & Unit Outcomes

- The required due dates for all gradable activities are shown below.
- All discussions provide a reference grading rubric, but the discussion grades are not based on the rubric, they are all or nothing as discussed earlier in the syllabus.
- **Each discussion is worth 100 points. The final reflection assignment is worth 400 points. To pass the course, participants need to get 900 out of 1000 points. This is a Pass/Fail course.**

Schedule of Graded Activities: Availability and Due Dates (all times EST)

Facilitator ADD DATES

Unit or Assignment	Unit opening dates/times	Discussion Initial Post & Backward Design Worksheet Assignment due every Wednesday	Discussion Reply due every Sunday
Getting Started	Thurs. 12:01 am		
Introductions Disc (ungraded)	Thurs. 12:01 am	Wed. 11: 59 pm	
Unit 1	Thurs. 12:01 am (NOTE: Sat. is the official start date of the course)	Wed. 11:59 pm	Sun. 11:59 pm
Unit 2	Fri. 12:01 am	Wed. 11:59 pm	Sun. 11:59 pm
Unit 3	Fri. 12:01 am	Wed. 11:59 pm	Sun. 11:59 pm
Unit 4	Fri. 12:01 am	Wed. 11:59 pm	Sun. 11:59 pm
Unit 5	Fri. 12:01 am	Wed. 11:59 pm	Sun. 11:59 pm

Unit or Assignment	Unit opening dates/times	Discussion Initial Post & Backward Design Worksheet Assignment due every Wednesday	Discussion Reply due every Sunday
Unit 6	Fri. 12:01 am	Wed. 11:59 pm	Sun. 11:59 pm
Backward Design Worksheet	Completed each week with the same due date as the initial discussion post: Wed. 11:59 pm	Unit 6 (2 attempts) 1 st attempt due Wed. 11:59 pm	Sun. 11:59 pm
Final Course Survey and Reflection Paper Assignment NOTE: Both are REQUIRED to pass the course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The link to the <u>survey</u> will be become available at the same time as Unit 6 on the Course Content page The link to the <u>Reflection Paper assignment</u> will show on the Course Content page <u>after</u> you have completed and submitted the course survey (Adaptive Release is used to control availability) 		Sun. 11:59 pm

Grading

Assignment Name:	Points Possible:		
	Initial Post	Reply Post	Total 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 pts each Units 2-6)			200 points (Item is REQUIRED to pass the course)
Course survey			Ungraded but REQUIRED to release the Final Reflection Paper assignment
Final Reflection Paper			200 points (Item is REQUIRED to pass the course)
TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE			1000 Points
TOTAL POINTS REQUIRED TO PASS THE COURSE			900 Points

Each discussion is worth 100 points. The final reflection assignment is worth 200 points, the backward design worksheet is worth 200 points. To pass the course, participants need to get 900 out of 1000 points. This is a Pass/Fail course.

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 and explain how it 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 do
- 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 and create accessible course content

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:

- 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 and 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
- Identify and apply essential elements needed to support learners in an online environment