

Richland's Guide to Online Standards

Purpose: This guide is to help you understand certain key components on the RLC Peer Observation Checklist. Also, general components for a successful online course design.

1. Course creates a clear navigation for students to follow. If course was created by a publisher, the publisher has created a clear navigation for students.

Do students understand what to do first? Do they understand where to go after an assignment? Try taking the student's point of view and sit down and look at your course through a student's point of view. Would you be lost? Guessing? Is all your information stated clearly? Remember, if you have to click several times to get to a main assignment maybe a button creation is a good idea. Are there buttons you aren't using or empty?

2. Instructions provide help to students to figure out where to begin and how to move through the course (Course Orientation or Start Here).

Students should not have to guess what to do or where to go once they have logged on to eCampus. Think about the things you would usually tell your students the first day of class. Incorporate the necessary information about course navigation, expectations, how to communicate with the instructor and other students, etc. It is helpful for students if you can set up a START HERE or a COURSE ORIENTATION button that explains information.

3. Learning outcomes align with course material, instruction, and assessment.

Learning outcomes and objectives are important for any course. Outcomes and objectives explain to the student what they are going to learn and how they are going to achieve what they need to learn. Are the learning objectives measurable? Are they specific and clear? Are they in a location accessible to students? In your learning outcomes/objectives do you have students go beyond content-related objectives for example: analyze or synthesize?

4. Grade book is current and reflects assignments. Grade book can be found on the District eCampus server.

Taking the student's point of view, does your grade book reflect all assignments? In your syllabus, is your grading policy clear and easy to understand?

5. Assessments are designed to measure learning objectives and provide feedback to student.

As part of alignment, an online course's assessments need to measure the created learning objectives and outcomes. It is important for students to get feedback (on what is wrong and where to find the correct information) on each assessment. For example, if a student does poorly on a quiz – do you as an instructor intervene?

6. Student among student engagement is part of the online course design.

According to Jan. 07 SACS publication on the Distance Ed. Policy Statement:

Definition of Distance Ed:

"For the purposes of the Commission's accreditation review, distance education is defined as a formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction (interaction between students and instructors and among students) in a course occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. A distance education course may employ correspondence study, or audio, video, or computer technologies."

Under Curriculum and Instruction:

"Programs and courses provide for timely and appropriate interaction between students and faculty and among students." This refers to the Principles of Accreditation: Principle of Integrity, Core Requirements, Comprehensive Standards, and Federal Requirements.