Online Course Readiness Checklist

The following criteria are all important and should be considered when developing or reviewing your online course.

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| Criteria | ✓ | Examples and Resources |
| COURSE OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION   |
| 1. The course has an introduction and a defined structure
 |   | Consider creating a course introduction video, conveying:* The instructors’ backgrounds
* Expectations for student engagement
* Special instructions related to quizzes or assignments
* How the course is organized
* What students can expect

Also, review this guide on [Creating Course Videos](https://teaching.cornell.edu/resource/creating-course-videos), as well as the documentation for tools on [Panopto](https://canvas.cornell.edu/courses/1848/pages/getting-started-in-panopto), [Kaltura](https://canvas.cornell.edu/courses/1848/pages/getting-started-in-kaltura), and [Zoom](https://canvas.cornell.edu/courses/1848/pages/getting-started-in-zoom). |
| 1. I have included a course syllabus
 |   | The following resource can help you create a robust syllabus:* [Create a Student-Centered Syllabus](https://canvas.cornell.edu/courses/8720/pages/table-of-contents)

In addition, go through the guides in the Canvas Resource Library to learn about Canvas tools; for example, the [[Syllabus Tool](https://canvas.cornell.edu/courses/1848/pages/syllabus)](https://learn.canvas.cornell.edu/getting-started-with-the-canvas-syllabus-tool/) and [Considering Course Structure: Posting a Syllabus](https://canvas.cornell.edu/courses/1848/pages/video-considering-course-structure-posting-a-syllabus). |
| 1. I have included a grading policy
 |   | Review the resources available on [Assessment Tools](https://teaching.cornell.edu/learning-technologies/assessment-tools). Consider what tools to use for grading; for example, [SpeedGrader](https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/tkb-p/Instructor#SpeedGrader) and [Gradescope](https://canvas.cornell.edu/courses/1848/pages/getting-started-in-gradescope) in Canvas. |
| 1. I have included a course schedule
 |   | A chronological list of topics for each class, along with required readings and preparation necessary for students. This can be added to a syllabus or as a table in a Canvas page: [Managing Tables in the Rich Content Editor](https://canvas.cornell.edu/courses/1848/pages/managing-tables-in-the-rich-content-editor). |
| 1. I (the instructor) have included a self-introduction
 |   | Instructors can introduce themselves using different methods; for example, an introductory video, at the start of a live virtual session, a post in an icebreaker discussion, a short text biography, etc. |
| 1. I have included measurable course learning outcomes
 |   | Consider reviewing this guide: [Getting Started Writing Learning Outcomes](https://teaching.cornell.edu/resource/getting-started-writing-learning-outcomes). |
| 1. I have included measurable unit learning outcomes
 |   | Learning outcomes for individual units are similar to course outcomes, except they are narrower in scope and align with the broader course outcomes. |
| 1. I have included a discussion in which students introduce themselves
 |   | Provide a way for students to meet each other in the first week of the course; for example, in a discussion forum or a live session using a video conferencing tool.Also, think about adding an icebreaker activity, for example:* play a game with their classmates
* respond to a funny and/or ‘getting to know you’ prompt
* explain why they are taking the course
* do something creative (e.g., drawing, video, song, poem, etc.)
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| Criteria  | ✓  | Examples and Resources  |
| **NAVIGATION/LAYOUT is easy to follow** |
| 1. Instructor provides instructions on the path the learner should take upon entry
 |  | Add instructions in the form of text, audio, and/or video to the course homepage or landing area explaining where students need to go upon entering the course for the first time and the first steps they need to take.* For example, refer them to an “Introduction,” “Getting Started,” or “Start Here” area that contains the course introduction, syllabus, course schedule, an icebreaker activity, etc.
 |
| 1. Content is organized logically (for example: by unit, topic, module, or week)
 |  | Create separate areas for individual units, topics or weeks; for example, using [Canvas Modules](https://canvas.cornell.edu/courses/1848/pages/managing-modules).Other layout and formatting strategies to consider:* use a simple layout and design; embrace white space
* disable Canvas course navigation tools that are not being used when possible. Review this article on how to [enable/disable navigation tools in Canvas](https://canvas.cornell.edu/courses/1848/pages/managing-course-navigation-links)
* use a consistent naming convention throughout the course (e.g., Week 1 Discussion, Week 2 Discussion, Week 3 Discussion, etc.), and a consistent order for materials, activities, and assessments for each unit, topic, or week
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| Criteria  | ✓  | Examples and Resources  |
| ASSESSMENTS |
| 1. **Assessments**
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| 1. I have included assessments in the course that align with learning outcomes
 |   | Assessments may be in the form of concept maps, minute papers, peer reviews, final exams, final papers, homework, discussions, practice quizzes, reflections, mid-term exams, final presentations, portfolios, etc.Review the resources available in [Assessment Tools](https://teaching.cornell.edu/learning-technologies/assessment-tools). |
| 1. If included, each assessment contains adequate directions for the students to complete successfully
 |   | In addition to writing adequate instructions, it is also recommended that instructor(s):* Appropriately label assignments (as required or optional)
* Keep instructions clear and concise by:
1. using short paragraphs and sentences
2. breaking up long content into multiple pages
3. using bulleted lists and subheadings when possible
 |
| 1. **Learning Progress**
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| 1. My course offers multiple opportunities for students to receive meaningful and timely feedback
 |   | These might be writing assignments with multiple draft submissions, self-scoring quizzes, peer reviews, meetings with the instructor(s)Learn more about creating opportunities for feedback through formative assessment from this guide: [Measuring Student Learning](https://teaching.cornell.edu/teaching-resources/assessment-evaluation/measuring-student-learning). |

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| Criteria  | ✓  | Examples and Resources  |
| INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS  |   |   |
| 1. Instruction is from multiple relevant sources and formats (e.g., publications, textbooks, videos, podcasts, websites, etc.).
 |   | Consider the principles of Universal Design for Learning and using multiple formats for sharing content. Learn more about [Universal Design for Learning](https://teaching.cornell.edu/teaching-resources/building-inclusive-classrooms/universal-design-learning). |
| 1. Instructional materials are easy to access and easy to use
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| Criteria  | ✓  | Examples and Resources  |
| ACCESSIBLE DESIGN ELEMENTS  |   | Review the resources available in [Accessibility & Accommodation](https://teaching.cornell.edu/learning-technologies/hybrid-online-learning/accessibility-accommodation-inclusion/accessibility).  |

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| Criteria  | ✓  | Examples and Resources  |
| ACTIVITIES & LEARNER INTERACTION  |   |   |
| 1. Each unit has opportunities for learners to interact with each other, the instructor(s), and/or the content in a way that supports the learning outcomes, with clear directions for learner participation.
 |   | For example, the unit may have learners interacting: * with each other in a small group activity, group discussion, or peer review assignment.
* with the instructor(s) in an assignment submitted for feedback or a discussion forum moderated by the instructor.
* with the content through active learning activities such as role-playing, case studies, simulations, labs, etc.

For other best practices, see this guide: [Best Practices for Engaging Content](https://teaching.cornell.edu/resource/best-practices-engaging-content). For small group activities, consider using [Breakout Rooms in Zoom](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206476093-Enabling-breakout-rooms) or [Discussion Forums in Canvas](https://canvas.cornell.edu/courses/1848/pages/discussions). |
| 1. Course includes a venue for class news and questions.
 |   | This may be in the form of one or more of the following: * discussion forum(s),
* pre-planned live sessions via Zoom, Skype, or another tool,
* announcement thread where learners can reply to the instructor(s)’ posts,
* other mechanisms for sharing and interacting.

Review the Canvas Resource Library for guides on Canvas [Announcements](https://canvas.cornell.edu/courses/1848/pages/announcements), [Discussion Forums](https://canvas.cornell.edu/courses/1848/pages/discussions), and other tools. In addition, instructor(s) can hold [Zoom Office hours](https://canvas.cornell.edu/courses/1848/pages/scheduling-zoom-office-hours).  |
| 1. One or more assessments and assignments ask learners to relate content to their own experiences and interests.
 |   | For example, instead of a final exam, have students complete a final project where they apply the content or the concepts to a subject or field of their choice. Review this article for other [Strategies for Increasing Student Motivation & Participation](https://teaching.cornell.edu/teaching-resources/engaging-students/increasing-student-motivation-participation).  |

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| Criteria  |  ✓  | Examples and Resources  |
| GENERAL POLICIES AND SUPPORT  |   |   |
| 1. Etiquette expectations for online discussions, email, live virtual sessions, and other forms of communication are clearly stated.
 |   | State guidelines for respectful behavior and communication for student-student interaction and student-instructor interaction. This can be in the form of a paragraph in the syllabus, a few bullet points in the discussion forum instructions, or live at the beginning of a virtual Zoom or Skype session. For example, see the suggestions in this article for [Making Zoom Sessions Inclusive](https://teaching.cornell.edu/teaching-resources/planning-remote-teaching/preparing-your-students-remote-learning/inclusion-0).  |
| 1. Course and/or institutional policies with which learners are expected to comply are clearly stated, or a link to current policies is provided.
 |   | For example, include statements about [academic integrity](https://teaching.cornell.edu/teaching-resources/planning-remote-teaching/preparing-your-students-remote-learning/promoting), accommodating students with disabilities, class attendance, extra credit, or any other applicable policies.  |
| 1. A description of the technical support offered and how to access it is clearly stated, or a link to it is provided.
 |   | Students can contact Cornell’s IT Services: <https://it.cornell.edu/support>. Instructor(s) can add this link to the syllabus or somewhere else in the course.  |
| 1. An explanation of how the institution’s academic support services and resources can help learners succeed in the course and how learners can access the services are clearly stated, or a link is provided.
 |   | For example, refer students to the [Learning Strategies Center](http://lsc.cornell.edu/) for study skill resources and time management tips.  |

*\*Criteria are based on the* [*Quality Matters Rubric*](https://www.qualitymatters.org/qa-resources/rubric-standards) *and* [*OLC’s Quality Scorecard*](https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/consult/olc-quality-scorecard-administration-online-programs/)*.*