Crafting and Implementing Online Course Standards for Quality Student Learning Experiences
Presenters

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via Zoom
Agenda

• Culture & Context
• Why Standards
• Creating Standards
• Implementing Standards
• Institutional Outcomes
INSPIRED BY CATHOLIC INTELLECTUAL TRADITION, THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS EDUCATES STUDENTS TO BE MORALLY RESPONSIBLE LEADERS WHO THINK CRITICALLY, ACT WISELY AND WORK SKILLFULLY TO ADVANCE THE COMMON GOOD.
Opus College of Business

Focus on working professionals

History of blended courses & programs

Handful of fully online courses
Instead of SHOULD we go online, it was HOW do we go online
Why have online course standards? What are the key benefits?

Why not? What are your key challenges?
Benefits to Online Standards

• **Student Experience**
  – Incorporate best online teaching practices
  – Predictable course design so can focus on content
  – Accessibility and Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

• **Instructional Design**
  – Build standards into templates
  – Simplify faculty decision-making
  – Standards institutionalized over time

• **Marketing and Admissions**
  – Ability to explain online student experience
Creating Standards
Operation FOSTER

Fully Online St. Thomas Experience Reimagined
Think about your learning objectives...

What are ideal learning experiences?
What are essential experiences?
What are experiences to avoid?
**Ideal**
- Personal communications from faculty
- Guest speakers from industry
- Virtual factory tour or site visit

**Essential**
- Consistent course interface
- Synchronous online sessions
- Access to relevant library resources

**Avoid**
- Long faculty absence from course
- Assigning work without time to plan & complete
- Requiring students visit campus (e.g. for exams)
Crafting and Socializing the Standards

**INITIAL DRAFT**
- Guiding principles from FOSTER
- Best practices in online education
- Other standards (e.g. OLC, QM)
- Required policies

**FEEDBACK & REVISION**
- Reasonable
- Useful
- Fit with Culture

**SOCIALIZATION**
- Why standards
- “Living document”
- Zoom sessions recorded & archived
Standards Overview

Index

• General Course Structure
• Learner Engagement
• Video Recordings
• Synchronous Sessions
• Time Standards – Deliverables
• Time Standards – Access
• Week 0 Standards
• Week 1 Standards
• Student-Professor Interaction
• Student Support & Accessibility
• Quality Assurance & Continuous Improvement
• Final Checks – Canvas Course Settings

Available at: https://lnkd.in/dg5asbC
## Time Standards – Deliverables

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<tr>
<th>Time Standards - Deliverables</th>
<th>Master</th>
<th>Section</th>
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<tr>
<td>In online graduate business courses, weeks run <strong>Monday to Sunday</strong></td>
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<td>Graded deliverables can only be assigned during official term dates, i.e. not before the course start and not after the course end date</td>
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<td>Graded deliverables should not be assigned during official program breaks (e.g. Spring Break, break between Term 1 and Term 2).</td>
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<td>Standard due dates are (mid-week) <strong>Thursday</strong> at 11:59 CT and (end of week) <strong>Sunday</strong> at 11:59 PM CT. Any different or additional due dates are up to faculty and should be clearly noted in Canvas.*</td>
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<td>Late work penalties are by instructor and should be clearly noted Holidays: If standard due date falls on a holiday (e.g. July 4), either extend the due date to the next day (e.g. July 5) or the next standard deadline (e.g. from Thu to Sun).</td>
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<td>3-credit courses: Please be mindful of Week 6, which is the last week of 1.5 credit courses that run Weeks 1-6. Recommendation to avoid MAJOR deliverables at that time (e.g. mid-term exam).</td>
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*This does not mean that you need 2 deliverable dates per week, but when you do, please use these times so students have a predictable rhythm.*
Implementing Standards
Integrate Standards Early and Often

12 Weeks
Templates with Integrated Standards

• Best practices
• Consistent navigation
• Templates for:
  • Getting Started Module
  • Module Overview Pages
  • Assignments
  • Discussions
  • Quizzes
  • Module Wrap-Up Pages
Onboarding Site

1. Foundations in Online Learning
2. Course Design and Alignment
3. Instructor Presence and Interactions
4. Activity Design
5. Canvas Site Creation and Accessibility
6. Sample Modules
Institutional Outcomes
Student Feedback

• Students surveyed the first time a course is offered online

• Asked about preferences re: standards in first terms (e.g., synchronous sessions, online office hours)

• **Key Results**
  – 93% thought the course design facilitated learning
  – 81% were satisfied with the online format (12% neutral)
  – 75% felt their learning was equivalent or more learning compared to F2F
Faculty Feedback

• **New faculty seem to appreciate the standards & templates**
  – They provide a starting point
  – Quality assurance review is completed before course launches
  – Some resistance, but we cite consistency as key for students

• **We have ongoing discussions with faculty**
  – What works well; challenges; improvements?
  – No changes made yet
What We Could Do Better

• Communicate standards with department chairs and faculty not involved in Operation FOSTER
• Student feedback is essential, but don't overdo it
• Assume nothing!
Questions?
Evaluate Sessions and Win!

- Download and open OLC Conferences mobile app
- Navigate to specific session to evaluate
- Select “Evaluate Session” on session details screen (located under session type and track)
- Complete session evaluation*

*Each session evaluation completed (limited to one per session) = one contest entry

**Five (5) $25 gift cards will be awarded**

Must submit evals using the OLC Conferences mobile app or website
Thank you!

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