

# Creating a Virtual Student Orientation Course for Online Success

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Resources for the Adult Education Practitioner



# Creating a Virtual Student Orientation Course for Online Success

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This training event is supported with federal funds as appropriated to the Florida Department of Education, Division of Career and Adult Education for the provision of state leadership professional development activities.

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## Guiding Questions

Think about the following guiding questions as you participate in today's session. Write down your thoughts and be prepared to share your ideas.

Slide(s)	Guiding Questions	My Thoughts
4-5	Think about what you want to take-away from this session.	
5	What are some questions we should keep in mind as you develop a VSO Course?	
6	What are the 6 objectives that are addressed in this training?	
9	What will students be expected to learn in the VSO Course?	
10-11	What 5 categories must be addressed as you consider VSO Course content?	
13-14	What should you consider when identifying course location & modality?	
15	What is synchronous vs. asynchronous instruction?	
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## Introduction

This training is centered around developing a Virtual Student Orientation (VSO) Course that will prepare adult education students for success in *any* online course; but before we delve into best practices to support this outcome, let us consider the conditions that led us here.

2020 challenged nearly all adult educators and students as they were unexpectedly forced to make a shift to virtual instruction due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Most educators had little or no idea how to set up and conduct virtual classes, let alone establish a virtual program that would ensure that they would be successful online teachers, and that their students would be successful online learners. IPDAE directors and training facilitators responded by researching emerging best practices and realized that the most successful virtual programs had one thing in common: they assigned students a mandatory virtual orientation course prior to their virtual course start date. This generated a great deal of interest.

Let us consider some additional background information that is unique to adult education. Some adult education courses have managed enrollment; but for the most part, the majority of these courses are open entry open exit. This means that new students are continuously enrolling in and attending our courses, a reality which makes our situation much more complex. This provided some clarity to the situation as we noticed that the biggest issue we were facing was two-fold: (1) How could we prepare our adult students for a virtual environment, and (2) how could we continuously prepare to integrate new students into already existing classes when they were lacking the necessary skills to successfully navigate the online program? The answer to both questions could be addressed with the development and implementation of a Virtual Student Orientation Course that would provide students with an opportunity to gain hands-on experience with the technology and activities that were built into their online courses.

As we progress through this *Companion Resource Handbook*, keep the following guiding questions in mind:

- How can we orient students to online learning?*
- What should be included in a virtual orientation course, and how should it be delivered?*
- How can we encourage students to complete the experience?*
- How will we know if the orientation course was successful?*

These questions form the underlying thought process as we lay the foundation for developing a Virtual Student Orientation Course. The focus of the course, in turn, includes the following:

- Boosting students' confidence for online success*
- Fostering a sense of community among students and faculty*
- Equipping students with the essential tools to be positive online community members*

- *Facilitating academic preparedness and skill-building*
- *Providing support and engagement resources, and*
- *Giving students the opportunity to use the technology they will encounter in their online courses*

We are all aware that online learning requires a unique set of skills in order to be successful. Students need to be self-motivated and be able to manage time, but they also require the ability to learn and effectively use new technologies, especially when referring to our adult ed population. Our adult ed students need specific training on the Learning Management System (LMS) and other educational technology. We need to address possible stumbling blocks they might encounter in their online courses if we are to retain them and ensure that they will experience academic achievement online. These are the thoughts that led us to the development of a 4-part process for developing a Virtual Student Orientation Course that all our adult education programs could use to create their own tailored versions. This *Companion Resource Handbook* will walk you through the process of developing this virtual orientation course which will prepare your students for success in any online class. We begin with an overview of this 4-part training.

### **Part 1: VSO Course Content & Learning**

In Part 1, we will address the overall content as well as the specific learning objectives for the VSO Course. In other words, what will students be expected to learn? We will also identify key content that should be included in the course.

### **Part 2: Course Design/Framework & Facilitated Instructional Approach**

In Part 2, we will address course design or framework and the facilitated instructional approach. This means we will explore course modality. In other words, where will the course be located? We will also outline the basic components of a facilitated instructional approach and explain why this is the best option for this VSO Course. I will also share with you specific recommended content for you to consider as you develop a VSO Course that fits the needs of your school, your programs, your teachers, and your students.

### **Part 3: Course Completion Requirements & Virtual Course Assessment**

In Part 3, we will define course completion requirements as well as look at virtual course assessment. We will explore how to determine successful completion of the VSO Course and address how the VSO Course affected overall student success in their virtual classes.

### **Part 4: Sharing Resources**

In Part 4, I will share some basic resources that you can use to develop a successful VSO Course. Some of these will include basic checklists as well as a sample syllabus and virtual course template you can easily replicate that includes both synchronous and asynchronous learning components.

## Part 1: VSO Course Content & Learning

As you start planning the development of your VSO Course, begin by considering course content and learning. There are two main topic questions you will need to address.

1. *What will students be expected to learn in the VSO Course?*
2. *What specific content will you include in your VSO Course?*

It's easy to see that these two questions are interrelated. Once you identify the expectations of what your students will need to be able to learn in the course, you will have a clearer picture of the content that you need to include as you develop the instructional framework for the course; but let's address one question at a time.

### 1. *What will students be expected to learn in the VSO Course?*

Every school site has its own unique demographics; therefore, the learning needs of your students are unique as well. In trying to determine how best to “personalize” your VSO Course to tailor to the needs of your school, your program, and your student body, there are some basic key components that should be included across the board.

1. *Technology Requirements (Hardware/Software)*
2. *Program Enrollment & Program Access*
3. *Student Assessment & Placement*
4. *Opportunities for Student Engagement (Navigating the Online Classroom)*
5. *Ongoing Student Support*

We begin by addressing **technology requirements**. What are the hardware requirements? Will students be required to access the course via phone, laptop, desktop, or some other method? What are the minimum operational requirements for the identified hardware? Next, let's address the software piece. What platforms/learning management systems (LMS) will your students be required to access and successfully navigate? Will you be using Canvas, Zoom, both? What about Computer Assisted Instruction? What additional software programs will be required for your course? You need to be clear on all of this information in order to later successfully communicate it to your students.

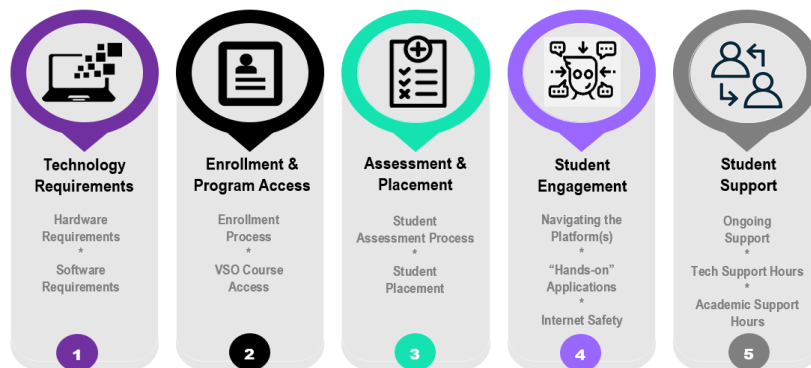
We now move to **program enrollment** and **program access**. You will need to determine the number of students who will participate in each VSO class. How will these students access the class? Will you provide them with a link at the time of registration? Will you email them the information later? Providing them with the information at the time of registration and following up with a follow-up link via email and/or text is your best option. The more venues you use to communicate with students, the greater your chances of success at reaching them.

Let’s address **student assessment** and **student placement**. An assessment piece should be included as part of your VSO Course. Will you have the ability to test students with, let’s say, for example, TABE or CASAS? How will you communicate the results to your students and explain their placement? What if you are unable to pretest students in order to determine placement? What alternative assessments and or placement methods will you use? Will you use Publisher Recommended Pretests? Will you add an interview as part of the requirement for assessing and placing students in the absence of standardized testing? All of these questions need answers. The fourth category is a critical one. You will need to identify **opportunities for student engagement**. In other words, you will need to provide as many opportunities as possible for students to navigate through the virtual platform and all of its online components.

Finally, you will need to look into offering **ongoing student support**. Regardless of the amount of instruction and practice that you provide students during the VSO Course, you must accept the fact that most students will require some sort of additional support throughout their virtual course enrollment. Be sure to identify how this type of additional support will be provided. For example, will student automatically be enrolled in this VSO Course simultaneously throughout the trimester as they attend their scheduled virtual course, or will they be given the option to simply access the VSO Course at any time that they feel a need for additional support? You may even consider assigning each student with a “tech tutor” that they can access at any time during their scheduled class time or outside of class time in order to address any questions, concerns, or issues. You may even offer mini “refresher” courses throughout the trimester or at the end of every week to address frequently encountered issues. These are just a few suggested possibilities, so be creative!

## 2. What specific content will you include in your VSO Course?

Now that you have determined what your students need to master as they progress through your VSO Course, you will need to identify and correlate the actual content for the course. I use the word “correlate” because this content must be directly tied to the learning expectations that you identified in the previous section. To set the stage, let’s consider the overarching categories in the chart below as you identify and organize your content. Later on, we will arrange these into sequential categories and address each in greater detail.







Technology Requirements

As you address technology requirements, be sure that you are clear as to the type of hardware and software that students must have and be able to use effectively throughout the virtual course. Will they need laptops, desktops, tablets, or even smart phones? What software programs must they familiarize themselves with? Canvas, Zoom, Burlington English, TABE Academy, LMS platforms?



Enrollment & Program Access

Your students will need to understand the steps for enrolling in the VSO Course and later accessing the course for the first time. How will you communicate the registration requirements for the course? Will they be able to register virtually? Will they be able to pay with a credit card? Or will they have to come into the facility and register in person? Will they need to pay cash? What forms of identification will they need to provide in order to register? Next, consider access to the VSO Course. Will the original contact be made via email, phone, text? You must be able to clearly communicate this information to all new students.



Assessment & Placement

Students must be assessed and accurately placed in the appropriate course and functional level to ensure that they remain challenged and engaged. This information must be clearly communicated to all students. They need to know the assessment tool that you are going to use to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and they need to know that this is the tool that will be used to place them in the most appropriate course and course level.



Student Engagement

A very large part of the content you will need to identify concerns the type of opportunities that you will provide your students in order to engage and motivate them. Students must clearly understand that the VSO Course will enable them to practice accessing and using all online components which they will encounter in their virtual classes. This connection is essential, so be sure to include multiple practice opportunities. In doing so, don't forget to include online safety which is paramount in all virtual courses.



We learn best and solidify our learning through practice opportunities that reinforce what we are taught. This means that *Ongoing* Student Support must be provided for the duration of the student's online course. Ask yourself, "What ongoing support will be available to students once they've completed the VSO Course?" I cannot emphasize how critical this is. Like you, your students will need additional support throughout the duration of their virtual courses. How will they be able to access this support? Will there be "breakout rooms" available with staff to answer questions and guide them through specific online activities, etc.? Will you set aside a designated time every day, or every week, where they can facetime in, call in, remote in, in order to request and receive assistance with their virtual courses? When addressing this, remember to provide students with as many options for additional support as possible. Also, be sure that this support is available throughout the duration of the virtual course dates.

## Part 2: Course Design/Framework and the Facilitated Instructional Approach

We are now ready to address the second part to developing a VSO Course which emphasizes course design/framework and the instructional approach which best supports our VSO Course: the facilitated instructional approach. Let's look at a few questions that will help guide us through this part.



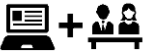
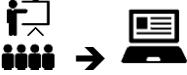
1. *What will be the course location and course modality?*
2. *What will the facilitated instructional approach look like?*

We will address one question at a time.

### 1. *What will be the course location and course modality?*

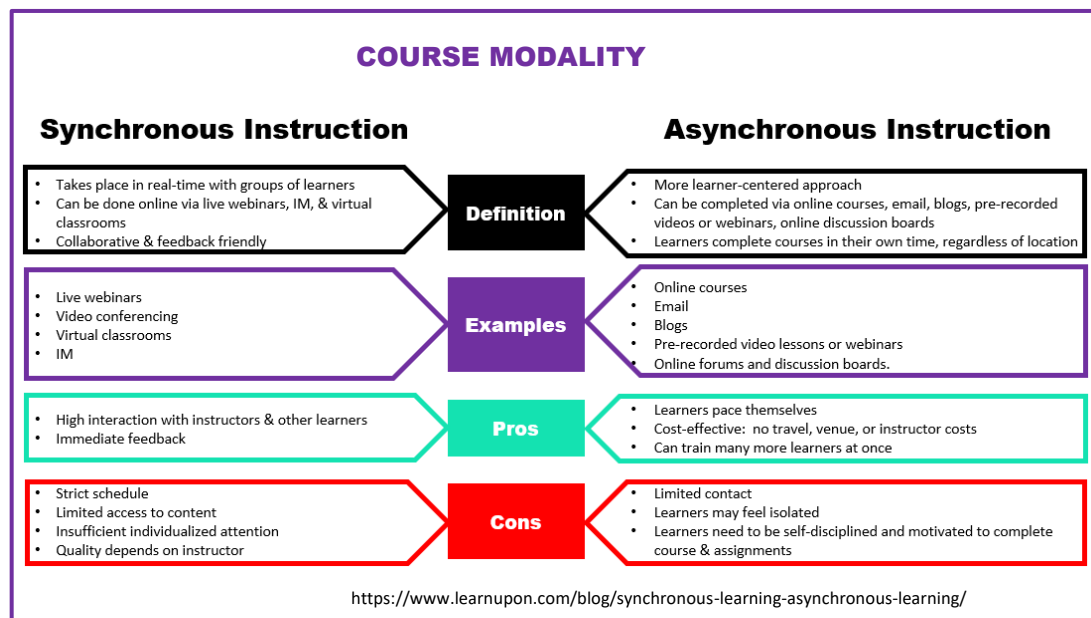
Where will your course be located? Will it be strictly virtual? What about course modality? Will you select a modality that mirrors that of the virtual course? For example, if the virtual course offers a combination of synchronous and asynchronous components, will the VSO Course be set up in the same manner? These questions all address course design/framework.

When we consider where to house our VSO Course, we need to consider 4 options:

<b>COURSE LOCATION: 4 OPTIONS</b>	
 <b>Face-to-Face</b>	<b>1</b> Will your course be housed in a physical classroom? Will instruction take place face-to-face with both the instructor and students present in the same room?
 <b>100% Virtual</b>	<b>2</b> Will your course be housed 100% online, and will all VSO Course content be taught virtually 100% of the time?
 <b>Hybrid</b>	<b>3</b> Will you opt for a combination of face-to-face and online and select a hybrid model where you have part of the course in a physical location and part in a virtual setting?
 <b>Transition</b>	<b>4</b> Will you opt for a transition type model where students begin attending the VSO Course in a physical setting and then transition to a virtual one as they gain confidence in mastering the online component?

As you think about the best model for course location, carefully consider this: It is essential for you to create a VSO Course within the same virtual space that mirrors the experience they will have in their online course. Students need to be able to actually use the tools they will use in their virtual courses in an environment that is as close as possible to the virtual course environment. Again, I urge you to keep this foremost in mind as you make this critical decision. The closer your VSO Course mirrors the online course, the greater success your students will experience.

Let's now move on to course modality. Most virtual courses today have two headline component types: synchronous and asynchronous. What do these terms mean? The chart on the following page gives us a clear understanding of both terms.



Let's interpret the chart above. Synchronous instruction refers to instruction that takes place in real-time with a group of learners. It can be done online via webinars, instant messaging, or virtual classrooms. It is a collaborative setting that provides opportunities for frequent feedback. On the other hand, we have asynchronous instruction. This type of instruction is *not* live. It is a more learner-centered approach. Instruction can be completed via online courses, email, blogs, prerecorded videos or prerecorded webinars, or online discussion boards. Learners complete courses in their own time, regardless of location.

Next, let's look at the pros and cons for each of these. When it comes to synchronous instruction, the pros are obvious. There is great opportunity for high interaction with instructors and other learners and feedback is immediate. The main con here is that learners have to adhere to a strict schedule and do not have the freedom to access content when and where they like. Sometimes, learners may feel like they're not getting the individual attention that they need, and basically speaking, the quality of the sessions depends on the instructor.

Asynchronous instructions offers a great deal of flexibility because learners pretty much move at their own pace. It's cost-effective because participants do not have to travel to a specific location and it's cheaper to provide because you can have many more students online than in a physical classroom with limited space. On the other hand, contact through an asynchronous setting may be limited. It can also leave some participants feeling isolated and unmotivated to complete assignments and course requirements. This disillusionment may lead to a higher student level of attrition.

We now move on to address instructional approach.

## ***2. What will be the instructional approach?***

There are basically three possible approaches: (1) the facilitated instructional approach, (2) the independent approach, (3) and a hybrid of both approaches. Due to the nature of our adult student body, we are strongly emphasizing and strictly focusing on the facilitated instructional approach. Think about the adult student population in your virtual classrooms. Some may be young and technologically savvy while, on the other hand, others may be significantly older with little to no formal schooling. Whichever the case, or anywhere in between, the facilitated approach is much more appropriate for our adult student population. With this approach, the VSO teacher walks the students through every component of the VSO Course rather than have them work through the curriculum on their own. Think about it, if students had to complete many of the VSO Course modules that we will cover in this handbook on their own, they would become easily frustrated and discouraged. The facilitated instructional approach avoids such a situation, but what exactly will this approach look like?

There are six target areas that we suggest you address as you set up activities for your VSO Course. Take a look at the chart on the following page. It lists the 6 target areas along with bulleted points of topics that we will address in detail in the remainder of Part 2. You will note that many of these topics have already been introduced. That is because you are going to develop the course based on content that was introduced at the beginning of this Companion Resource Handbook.

THE FACILITATED INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH: 6 TARGET AREAS	
<b>GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	<b>1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technology Requirements</li> <li>Enrollment &amp; Program Access</li> <li>Student Assessment</li> <li>Student Placement</li> <li>Internet Safety Guidelines &amp; Procedures</li> </ul>
<b>COURSE CONSIDERATIONS</b>	<b>2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VSO Course Location</li> <li>Course Modality</li> <li>Virtual Instructional Platform</li> <li>Concurrent Communication Plan</li> </ul>
<b>VSO COURSE CONTENT</b>	<b>3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hardware &amp; Software Requirements</li> <li>Concurrent Communication Plan</li> <li>Overview of Primary LMS (Synchronous &amp; Asynchronous)</li> <li>Required Virtual Accounts – Creating/Accessing ALL Online Accounts</li> <li>Student Placement &amp; Enrollment in the Virtual Course</li> </ul>
<b>VSO COURSE ACCESS</b>	<b>4</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steps for Initial Access to VSO Course</li> <li>Required Procedures to be Established</li> </ul>
<b>ONGOING SUPPORT</b>	<b>5</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing Technical Support</li> <li>Ongoing Academic Support</li> </ul>
<b>ADDITIONAL RESOURCES</b>	<b>6</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List of Additional Available Resources</li> <li>Procedures for Accessing Additional Resources</li> </ul>

### 1 GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

**Technology Requirements.** We begin by looking at the technology requirements for the course. What are the hardware requirements for the VSO course? Remember, the VSO Course should mirror the online course as much as possible. If students will be using a laptop for the LMS web application as well as a cell phone with the cell app, then be sure to identify this information at the onset of the VSO Course. You need to do the same with the software requirements. What LMS platform do you plan to use? Will there be any CAI or Computer Assisted Instructional programs in addition to the main platform? For example, will students need to use Canvas as well as Zoom. Will you be supporting instruction with an additional LMS platform such as TABE Academy? Will students be using “virtual” workbooks? All of these questions need to be answered ahead of setting up your VSO Course content.

**Enrollment & Program Access.** Next, what will the enrollment process look like for your VSO Course, and how will students be able to access the VSO course? After all, it is an online course, and many of your adult students have never even used a computer. Be sure that the registration or enrollment process is as streamlined as possible. Be sure students know how much the VSO Course as well as the online course will cost. You will probably want to make the VSO Course mandatory, yet free. This way you will be able to entice new students to joining your programs. Also, be clear about the payment method. You may even want to create a VSO Course Access cheat note with a simple flowchart of the registration/enrollment process along with detailed steps and information on how to access the VSO Course. The more options you provide here, the better. For example, you may want to email students with the course link and provide a contact name and cell number for the designated person who will walk them through the process of downloading key applications in order to access the VSO Course.

**Student Assessment.** We are now at the point where we need to think about how we are going to assess students our students. Let's just think about the most difficult scenario we faced earlier this year: having new students wanting to take an ESOL or ABE class, for example, and not knowing what level to place them in because testing has been temporarily suspended. Oh, and of course, there's no virtual testing in place yet. Well, there are other options. You should always conduct some sort of oral screening. If you have the ability to test your students with an approved online standardized test, then do so. If not, consider using the placement test that accompanies your text series. Most publishers provide one.

**Student Placement.** Now that you have determined how you are going to best evaluate incoming students, you need to place them in the appropriate course and functional level. What will this look like? How will you register them for the appropriate online course and level? What will this registration process look like? Will you automatically schedule them into the appropriate course and provide them with the documentation, or will they have to proceed with the registration process on their own? These are all questions you will need to answer; and remember, the more streamlined the process, the less frustrated your students will be. Also, don't forget to have a data chat with your students prior to registering them for their online course. Make sure that they understand the method that you used in order to correctly place them. Also, be sure to share how they will be evaluated throughout the course in order to move to the next functional level.

**Internet Safety.** Finally, let's briefly address internet safety. Be sure to include your district's internet policy use as part of your VSO Course. You want to be sure that all students understand the do's and don'ts of internet use, and you want to ensure a safe online environment where all students are comfortable attending their online courses, participating in shared activities, and simply interacting with their instructors and each other.

## 2 COURSE CONSIDERATIONS

**Course Location.** We have already addressed some of the components under course considerations; however, I will go into a little more detail in this section. With regard to course location, the information is the same. Will you hold the course in a physical space where students will attend? Or will the course be a virtual one? Well, it's called VSO (Virtual Student Orientation) Course for a reason. If this course is supposed to prepare students for online success, it only stands to reason that the best way to set up your VSO Course is to do it 100% online. This doesn't mean that you won't be providing direct support; it only means that this is the format for the course. In situations where you may have illiterate students, consider a hybrid option or one that transitions from face-to-face to virtual.

**Course Modality.** Let's continue with course modality. Refer back to the information we covered on synchronous vs. asynchronous instruction. Remember, synchronous learning is online or distance learning that happens in real time. It's not as flexible as asynchronous learning because synchronous learning occurs within a set class schedule and has required login times. Asynchronous provides more flexibility, so students can complete their work at their convenience. This being said, it's easy to see that a combination of both would provide students with the greatest amount of flexibility and learning opportunities. In this step, you need to specifically identify what synchronous components and asynchronous components you will include in both your VSO Course and online courses. If this is your first virtual course, try to keep it as simple as possible. Start with a minimal number of components, and then add as you and your students become more proficient in the virtual course. For example, when identify synchronous components, start with just a few: maybe the live conference option along with the live chat. As you master this, you can add "breakout rooms, etc." Do the same when selecting asynchronous components for your online class. Always include pre-recorded lessons that students can refer to at their leisure. Be sure your email function is working, and then start with basic assignments and quizzes. You can then add discussion posts and even polls as you gain confidence.

**Virtual Instructional Platform.** Now you know where you're going to hold your course, and what components to include. Next, you have to select the right LMS platform. Do a little research. See which platform includes the components you selected. Is it Canvas? Or Zoom? What I really want to emphasize here is that you must also select a Plan B option. Don't stick to just one option because I guarantee that this option will fail at some point. When this happens, you want to be sure that you can transition instruction to another platform or method of communication. This is critical and will avoid a great deal of anxiety on your part as well as for your students.



**Concurrent Communication Plan.** Be sure to have a concurrent communication plan. You may be asking yourself, “What is this?” Well, it goes hand in hand with your Plan B. You want to be sure that you establish as many communication methods as possible with your students. This should transition to every online course that they take. Establish a procedure where students know to automatically click on the link for Plan B when the main LMS platform is out of commission. Also, you may want to set up a WhatsApp group to easily communicate instructions to your entire class in case of technical difficulties. Whatever you decide, be sure to communicate this information clearly in your VSO Course and give students an opportunity to practice these methods of communication.

We are now ready to address course content.

### **3 VSO COURSE CONTENT**

What course content will be included in your VSO Course? You need to be strategic when identifying essential content for your VSO Course. In this section, I will organize suggested content into 8 categories in order to facilitate the process. Take a look at the summary chart on the following page. Each category is addressed in greater detail following the chart.

## VSO COURSE CONTENT: 6 TOPIC CATEGORIES

### HARDWARE & SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS

1

- Hardware Requirements
  - Desktop/Laptop
  - Tablet
  - Smart Phone
- Software Requirements
  - Canvas/Zoom/Teams
  - WhatsApp/Facetime
  - Cell Apps

### CONCURRENT COMMUNICATION PLAN

2

- Links to all platforms on main LMS homepage
- All contact information & procedures outlined on course syllabus

### OVERVIEW OF PRIMARY LMS

3

- Required Synchronous Components
  - Live conference, chat, poll, breakout rooms, etc.
- Required Asynchronous Components
  - Posts, assignments, quizzes, gradebook, etc.

### ESTABLISHING ALL ONLINE ACCTS.

4

- All Required Additional Accounts Identified
  - CAI programs, cell phone apps, Microsoft programs, etc.

### NAVIGATING COURSE COMPONENTS

5

- Synchronous Components
  - Accessing links
  - Chatting, breakout rooms, etc.
- Asynchronous Components
  - Posting, submitting assignments
  - Taking quizzes, etc.

### STUDENT ASSESSMENT

6

- How will students be assessed for their virtual courses?
  - Oral screening
  - Physical/Virtual standardized testing (CASAS/TABE)
  - Publisher's placement tests, etc.

### STUDENT COURSE PLACEMENT & ENROLLMENT

7

- Data to be used for functional level placement
  - Once placed, how will students register for the online course?
  - Virtually? / In Person?

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES & ONGOING SUPPORT

8

- Additional Resources
  - Enrichment activities
  - Project-based activities
  - Learning links/CAI (Burlington English/TABE Academy)
- Ongoing Support
  - Technical Support
  - Academic Support (tutoring, "ask an expert", chat, breakout room, etc.)

**Hardware and Software Requirements.** Be sure to specify all hardware and software requirements for the VSO Course. These should mirror the requirements for the online course. What type of hardware will students be using? Will they need a laptop computer for the course? Will they be provided with one, or will they need to have their own? Does the platform you selected also have a phone app? If so, will their cell phone support the app download? This is actually an important piece because you always want to be sure that students can access your class from anywhere. If they are not at home but have the cell phone app, they will be able to access the course from just about anywhere. Also, be sure to identify all of the software that will be used in the online course and don't forget to include cell phone apps.

**Concurrent Communication Plan.** We briefly addressed the concurrent communication plan earlier in this Companion Resource Handbook; however, when referring to VSO Course content, be sure to specifically identify ALL methods of communication that students will need to master for their online course. You want to be sure to provide links to all platforms as well as additional forms of communication including school and personal emails, cell numbers, WhatsApp, Facetime, etc. Course instructor contact information and information on accessing all methods of communication identified on your concurrent communication plan should be clearly listed on the LMS platform as well as on the course syllabus

**Overview of Primary LMS.** Once the basic requirements are out of the way, be sure to list the required synchronous and asynchronous components for the course. As mentioned earlier in the training, start with the basics and add components as you and your students become more versatile with the online course components.

**Establishing ALL Online Accounts.** Because your VSO Course should mirror the online course as much as possible, you want to be sure to provide students with an opportunity to set up any online accounts that they will need for their online course. Be sure that they download Plan A, Plan B, ... LMS web applications. Also, make sure that they download the cell phone apps as well. Will your students be using any CAI programs such as TABE Academy or Burlington English? If so, help them to download the applications and set up their accounts. Teach them to save their passwords and record them in their phone wallet. Will students need to complete assignments in Microsoft Word, Excel, or PowerPoint, for example? If so, be sure that they have access to these software programs as well.

**Navigating Course Components.** We continue with navigating through the various online programs. Be sure that you include opportunities for students to practice navigating through all of the online platforms as well as downloading and uploading content. The more opportunities they have to practice what they will encounter in their online courses, the more successful they will be. In fact, this is what will predominantly determine the success of your VSO Course. This is what will determine its effectiveness in preparing students for online success

**Student Assessment.** Be sure to address student assessment in depth. Identify how students will be assessed. What tests will you use? Do you have online standardized testing available? Or do you plan to use a publisher's placement test? Make a decision and stick to it.

**Student Course Placement & Enrollment.** Set up a time to discuss individual test results with the students. Make sure you are clear on the placement requirements for each course and level and that these are available to be shared with students. Also, identify the registration process for the online course. Include this in your VSO Course so that there is a smooth transition from the orientation course to the actual online course. Remember the cheat note that we discussed earlier? Use this to walk them through the process. Be as specific as possible.

**Additional Resources & Ongoing Support.** Finally, it's time to address additional resources and ongoing support. What additional resources will be available to your students, and how will they access them? If these are virtual resources, the access piece is critical. Students need to have a clear understanding of where these resources are housed and how they can be accessed. We also need to address ongoing support. You should provide two main types of ongoing support: technical and academic. Next, you need to decide how you will set up these support options. For example, with regard to technical support, what model will you implement? Will you have a floating technical support person? Will you set up a "breakout room" where students can go for tech support during course hours? Will you have a weekly tech support training session? In looking at ongoing academic support, you will need to determine what additional support venues will be available to your students. Will you have CAI (Computer Assisted Instructional) programs available to support classroom instruction? Will students have access to enrichment activities and project-based activities? These questions need to be addressed as you set up your VSO Course.

#### **4 VSO COURSE ACCESS**

**VSO Course Enrollment.** There are two basic considerations regarding how your students can gain access to the VSO Course. The first has to do with actual enrollment in the course. How will your students register for the VSO Course? What documentation is required? What is the cost? How can they pay for the course? Sit with your registration team and be sure to address any and all registration requirements. Also, be sure to streamline the process as much as possible in order to avoid frustration on the part of the student as well as your staff.

**Initial VSO Course Access.** Now that the students have registered for the VSO Course, how will they access it initially? Who is the first point of contact for the course? For example, will the students receive an email or phone call to help them set up access to the instructional platform? What's the backup plan? Will students receive a link with access to the platform? As and answer these questions to help you decide the best course of action.

## 5 ONGOING SUPPORT

**Ongoing Technical Support.** When talking about offering ongoing support, we really need to separate this into two categories. Let's begin with ongoing tech support. There are many ways of offering this type of support. You just have to figure out the best option for your program and your students. For example, is it best to schedule fixed tech support hours throughout the virtual instructional days? Will you assign a specific person or specific people to provide this ongoing support? Will students be able to access tech support via breakout rooms? Or will you even consider allowing students to have continued access to the VSO Course throughout the duration of their enrollment in their online course? Think about these questions. Talk to your team and come up with an innovative solution that satisfies the needs of your students.

**Ongoing Academic Support.** Now let's talk about ongoing academic support. You normally wouldn't consider this in a virtual setting, but the setting doesn't change the fact that at some point in time during the course of the trimester, you will have students who will require some sort of academic intervention. Be proactive and consider setting up tutoring hours, weekly reviews, and even virtual lab hours. Identify CAI programs that support classroom instruction.

## 6 ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**Digital & Traditional Resources.** We have finally reached the last category under our selected facilitated instructional approach: Additional Resources. This is similar to ongoing academic support, but it takes on a more independent and individual feel. For example, you may wish to identify and set up digital resources that students can access should they wish to enrich their learning. You may also set up project-based activities or even simple folders where you can upload materials that students can easily download and print should they so desire.

# Part 3: Course Completion Requirement & Virtual Course Assessment

We have arrived at Part 3 of developing a VSO Course which emphasizes course completion requirement and virtual course assessment. Let's look at two questions that will help guide us through this part.

1. *How will successful VSO Course completion be determined?*
2. *How did the VSO Course affect overall student success in their virtual classes?*

Let's begin with the first question.

## 1. How will successful VSO Course completion be determined?

What does successful completion of the VSO Course look like? How will successful completion be determined? There are no set guidelines here; however, we're including a simple checklist that you can use to begin to identify key components that all students attending your VSO Course should complete. Remember, this checklist should be used as a guide. Be sure to discuss this with your instructional team to ensure that you include all key points toward successful VSO Course completion. The checklist is on the following page.

Checklist: VSO-Course Requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Hardware requirements met</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> All required virtual accounts set up</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Student assessment</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Student placement &amp; registration in virtual course</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Navigation and sample activities for synchronous learning</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Navigation and sample activities for asynchronous learning</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Concurrent communication plan requirements met</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Review of course syllabus and course requirements/expectations</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Access to additional resources</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Access to ongoing tech support</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Access to ongoing academic support</li></ul>

We continue with the second question.

## 2. How did the VSO Course Affect overall student success in their virtual classes?

We need to be able to identify the impact of the VSO Course on overall students' success in their virtual classes. In other words, we need to be able to identify the data that points that we will use in order to make this evaluation. Below is another checklist with basic information that you should consider when evaluating the success of your VSO Course. Remember, the key measure of success is how much of a positive impact this course will make on overall students' success in their virtual classes.

Checklist: Data Parameters for Evaluating VSO Course Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Number of students completing the VSO Course</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Number of students enrolling in a virtual course following VSO Course completion</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Number of students completing the virtual course successfully</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Number of students participating in ongoing tech support</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Number of students participating in ongoing academic support</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> VSO Course evaluation</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Virtual course evaluation</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Suggested improvement points</li></ul>

## Part 4: Sharing Resources

In this last part of the Companion Resource Handbook, I will share and go over some basic resources that will further assist you in developing a successful VSO Course.

1. [VSO Course Checklist](#)
2. [Easy-to-Navigate LMS Homepage \(Template\)](#)
3. [LMS Homepage: Teacher View vs. Student View](#)
4. [Course Syllabus Template](#)
5. [Sample Instructional Framework](#)
6. [Online Course Evaluation Rubric \(OCER\) for Online Courses](#)

Let me briefly go over each of these resources.

### 1. VSO Course Checklist

The chart below contains all of the basic information that we addressed in Parts 1 and 2 on what needs to be addressed when setting up your VSO Course. It has been created in an easy checklist format for your convenience. For a full-size sample, see the Appendix section of this Companion Resource Handbook.

COMPONENTS OF A FACILITATED INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH: DISCUSSION POINTS FOR VSO COURSE DEVELOPMENT						
GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS	COURSE CONSIDERATIONS	VSO COURSE CONTENT		VSO COURSE ACCESS	ONGOING SUPPORT	ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
<b>TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Hardware Requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Software Requirements  <b>ENROLLMENT &amp; PROGRAM ACCESS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Enrollment Process <input type="checkbox"/> Cost/Payment <input type="checkbox"/> VSO Course Access (Cheat Note)  <b>STUDENT ASSESSMENT</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Oral Screening <input type="checkbox"/> Standardized Testing (CASAS/TABE) <input type="checkbox"/> Publisher Placement Test(s)  <b>STUDENT PLACEMENT</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Determinants for placing student in appropriate course and functional level  <b>INTERNET SAFETY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Guidelines & Procedures <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring Safety	<b>VSO COURSE LOCATION</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Face-to-face <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid <input type="checkbox"/> Transition (F-T-F to Virtual)  <b>COURSE MODALITY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Synchronous Components <input type="checkbox"/> Asynchronous Components  <b>INSTRUCTIONAL PLATFORM</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Primary Platform (Canvas, Teams, etc.?) <input type="checkbox"/> Plan B (Zoom?)  <b>CONCURRENT COMMUNICATION PLAN</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Identify concurrent methods of communication in case of technical issues	<b>HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Laptop, desktop <input type="checkbox"/> Tablet <input type="checkbox"/> Cell phone  <b>SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Main LMS <input type="checkbox"/> Plan B, C, ...Platforms (cell apps, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> CAI (Digital workbooks, etc.)  <b>CONCURRENT COMMUNICATION PLAN</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Cell, text, WhatsApp, Facetime, School/personal email, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Links to Plan B LMS  <b>OVERVIEW OF PRIMARY LMS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Synchronous Components <input type="checkbox"/> Asynchronous components  <b>REQUIRED VIRTUAL ACCOUNTS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Create all additional virtual accounts for online course <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure access	<b>NAVIGATING ALL ONLINE COURSE COMPONENTS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Identify all synchronous components <input type="checkbox"/> Identify all asynchronous components <input type="checkbox"/> Practice navigating through all synchronous/asynchronous components <input type="checkbox"/> Include multiple synchronous/asynchronous practice activities  <b>STUDENT ASSESSMENT</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Oral Screening <input type="checkbox"/> Standardized Testing (CASAS/TABE) <input type="checkbox"/> Publisher Placement Test(s)  <b>PLACEMENT &amp; ENROLLMENT IN ONLINE COURSE</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Data chat <input type="checkbox"/> Identify and register in appropriate course & functional level <input type="checkbox"/> Registration process (streamline to avoid frustration) <input type="checkbox"/> Course reporting date (start/end dates) <input type="checkbox"/> Online course syllabus (course outline, requirements, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Instructional Framework for online course [greater structure = greater level of student success]	<b>ENROLLMENT</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Registration requirements/process (virtual or physical, cost, payment method, required documentation)  <b>INITIAL VSO COURSE ACCESS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Contact via phone, email, text? <input type="checkbox"/> Provided instruction cheat note? <input type="checkbox"/> Provided link(s)?	<b>ONGOING TECH SUPPORT</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Scheduled tech support hours <input type="checkbox"/> Assigned tech support personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Open access to VSO Course  <b>ONGOING ACADEMIC SUPPORT</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Tutoring hours <input type="checkbox"/> Scheduled weekly reviews <input type="checkbox"/> CAI programs (Burlington English, TABE/GED Academy, digital workbooks, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> On-site lab hours <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual lab hours	<b>INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Topic notes <input type="checkbox"/> Charts <input type="checkbox"/> Additional resources section on LMS  <b>ACTIVITIES RESOURCES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Enrichment activities <input type="checkbox"/> Project-based activities

## 2. Easy-to-Navigate LMS Homepage (Template)

When you look at the sample LMS homepage, you can see how it is set up for easy navigation and immediate access to critical information such as course information and access information to instructional platforms. Notice that a welcome message with basic course information is easily located. Also, all pertinent access links for the course have been included on the home page, along with all required meeting codes and passwords.

The screenshot shows the Canvas LMS interface for a course named "Moldes: ESOL 3". On the left is a dark sidebar with navigation icons for Home, Account, Dashboard, Courses, Calendar, Inbox, History, Commons, and Help. The main content area has a light blue header with the course title. Below the header is a navigation menu with items like Modules, Announcements, Conferences, Grades, Discussions, Assignments, Quizzes, Files, People, Pages, Collaborations, Syllabus, Rubrics, Outcomes, and Settings. The main content area features a large blue banner with a notepad and pencil icon. To the right of the banner is a red box with the text "Welcome & Course Information". Below this is a white box with the text "Welcome to ESOL 3!" and "Monday - Friday, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM". Below this is a red box with the text "Click on 'Conferences' at 9:00 AM daily to access your class live!". To the left of this is another red box with the text "Access Links & Passwords". Below this is a white box with the text "Access links:" and a list of links: "Join Zoom Meeting", "https://dadeschools.zoom.us/j/96288785258?pwd=UGNCbmFBRG13TU5jaDhYV3duTVlkZz09", "Meeting ID: 962 8878 5258", "Passcode: 777464", "Link to Canvas with Code: https://canvas.instructure.com/enroll/8KADD6", "Class Code: 8KADD6", "Click here to access MyELT", "Click here to access Burlington English", and "Click here to access Canvas tutorials".

## 3. LMS Homepage: Teacher View vs. Student View

Take a look at the teacher view and student view of a course homepage on the following page. The teacher view is on the left and the student view is on the right. We used Canvas as the sample LMS platform; however, you can easily transfer the content to any other platform. The key point is to keep it as simple and as easy to navigate as possible for both your teachers and students.

On the teacher view, you can see that the course syllabus is readily accessible at the top. Then, you have instructional modules set up by week. Each week contains the same basic information: Competencies, Common Board Configuration or CBC of content to be taught that week, the recorded live instructional sessions for the week, course assignments for the week, etc.

On the student view, you can see that there are 4 simple tabs: Home, Modules, Conferences, and Grades. This simplified view makes it easier for students to navigate through the platform.



The syllabus is at the top for easy access. Then, there are weekly modules with all required instructional information by week. This mirrors the information on the teacher view.

The image displays two screenshots of the Canvas LMS interface, illustrating the difference between the Teacher View and the Student View. Both views show a navigation menu on the left and a main content area on the right.

**TEACHER VIEW:** The navigation menu is highlighted with a red box and a red arrow. The menu items are: Home, Modules, Announcements, Conferences, Grades, Discussions, Assignments, Quizzes, Files, People, Pages, Collaborations, Syllabus, Rubrics, Outcomes, and Settings. The main content area shows a syllabus for "Syllabus ESOL 3 Fall 2020 last.docx" and a weekly module for "Week 1: 8/24 - 8/28" containing various assignments, quizzes, and discussions.

**STUDENT VIEW:** The navigation menu is also highlighted with a red box and a red arrow. The menu items are: Home, Modules, Conferences, and Grades. The main content area shows the same syllabus and weekly module, but with a more detailed view of the weekly content, including "CASAS competencies: Listening 0.2.1,0.2.2,0.2.3,0.2.4" and "Topic Basic Communication /Personal Information".

## 4. Course Syllabus Template

Let's look at the sample syllabus template below. I've broken it down into 2 sections in order to address key components more easily. In Section 1 below, notice that you have the instructor's access information at the top underneath the course name. It's followed by access links to the Primary LMS (which is Canvas in this example) and Plan B LMS (which is Zoom). This basically means that if Canvas isn't working, students will automatically access Zoom as the Plan B option. Under the links, you have the required materials for the course followed by the Instructional Framework. The Instructional Framework basically outlines the progression of instructional activities on a daily basis.

### ABE E & M Course Syllabus

**Instructor Information:**

**Instructor:** Andres Novo  
**Email:** 319195@dadeschools.net  
**WhatsApp:** 786-716-9254  
**Office Hours:** Fridays, 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

**Section 1**

**Online Access Links:**

Canvas: <https://canvas.instructure.com/login/canvas>  
Zoom: <https://dadeschools.zoom.us/j/93124087297?pwd=NmZMQWExdTZmVUYxM21CSFkyZXdQQT09>

**Required Materials:**

**Text:** TABE Language Essentials, TABE Reading Essentials  
**Software:** TABE 11/12 Academy (provided by Miami Sunset)

**Instructional Framework:**

Monday – Thursday Activities:	Friday Activities:
Coffee Chat	TABE Competency Instruction
Close Reading	Dictation
Breakout Rooms	Pronunciation Focus
TABE Competency Instruction	Confusing Words in English
Peer Review	In America: All About Idiomatic Expressions
Pronunciation Practice	Student Presentations
TABE Academy – BluAppl DI Rotations	English Games / Student Competitions

As we continue exploring Section 2 of our sample syllabus on the following page, you can see that the minimum course requirements have been included. Following these requirements is a detailed Calendar of instructional content and required activities by week. As you develop your course syllabus, be as specific as possible with regards to what instructional content will be addressed and when it will be covered. Also, be sure that you clearly outline student responsibilities, assignment due dates, assessment dates, etc. Avoid clutter but be specific about your instructional expectations.

### Minimum Requirements for Course Completion:

**Virtual Class Attendance:** Minimum of 5 hours of attendance per week during scheduled class times

**BluAppl:** Minimum 70% Mastery of Competencies Listed on BluAppl Individualized Plan

**TABE Academy:** Minimum of 3 hours on TABE Academy outside of scheduled class times

**Assignments:** Minimum 70% completion of all assignments

## Section 2

### Calendar & Instructional Focus:

#### Notes:

1. The TABE competencies listed on this syllabus and BluAppl are those which are tested and will be emphasized during instruction. Be sure that you have mastered these listed competencies. Refer to your BluAppl IISP for Reading and Language in order to determine which competencies to emphasize.
2. Fridays are reserved for the following topics: Grammar, Pronunciation, Confusing Words, Idiomatic Expression, Video Activity, Student Presentation, Games/Competitions. More detailed information will be posted in Canvas under weekly activities.

#### Week 1: Aug. 26-27 (2 days)

TABE Competencies

- Language: Capitalization (E: 2.L.2.a/ 3.L.2.a) (M: 4.L.2.a). Italics (M: 5.L.2.d)
- Reading: Phonics and Word Recognition (E: 2.RF.3/ 2.RF.3.a/ 2.RF.3.b/ 2.RF.3.e/ 2.RF.3.f)

#### Week 2: Aug. 31 – Sept. 4 (5 days)

TABE Competencies

- Language: Apostrophes (E: 2.L.2.c/ 3.L.2.d). Commas (E: 2.L.2.b/ 3.L.2.b/ 3.L.2.c) (M: 4.L.2.b 5.L.2.a/5.L.2.b/ 5.L.2.c). Quotation Marks (E: 3.L.2.c) (M: 4.L.2.b)

For a full-size view of this sample syllabus, see the Appendix section of this Companion Resource Handbook.

## 5. Sample Instructional Framework

Look at the sample Instructional Framework below. A structured instructional framework helps you increase your effectiveness as a teacher. It outlines how you design your lessons around content and activities. Refer back to the Instructional Framework as you deliver online instruction so that students can monitor the progression of instruction and instructional activities. As you think about developing an instructional framework for your online course, be sure to select activities that support your students' needs as well as address state/district instructional requirements for your course. Also, be sure to include a variety of activities that are highly engaging and that provide multiple opportunities for teacher-student and student-student interactions.

Instructional Framework:	
Monday – Thursday Activities:	Friday Activities:
Coffee Chat Close Reading Breakout Rooms TABE Competency Instruction Peer Review Pronunciation Practice TABE Academy – BluAppl DI Rotations	TABE Competency Instruction Dictation Pronunciation Focus Confusing Words in English In America: All About Idiomatic Expressions Student Presentations English Games / Student Competitions

## 6. Online Course Evaluation Rubric (OCER) for Online Courses

The last sample document I wish to share with you is this sample Online Course Evaluation Rubric from Clarkson College. This is just a snip; however, you can access a full copy of this rubric at the link below the visual or in the Appendix section of this Companion Resource Handbook. This rubric is quite detailed, but it serves as an excellent guide in helping you develop a tailored one that fits your online course. I particularly like this sample because it identifies best practices in addition to just providing you with a measuring tool. Also, read below the picture for an overview of the entire document.

Online Course Evaluation Rubric (OCER) For Online Courses					
Course Overview and Introduction					
Criteria	Emerging (1)	Developing (2)	Accomplished (3)	Exemplary (4)	Best Practices
Course Overview	The instructor provides an overview of the course which includes 2 or less of the following: 1. Instructor's introduction is present. 2. Provides an overview of the course. 3. A syllabus is posted for students. 4. Provides clear instructions for getting started. 5. Initiates a positive learning environment by having students introduce	The instructor provides an overview of the course which includes some (3-4) of the following: 1. Instructor's introduction is present. 2. Provides an overview of the course. 3. A syllabus is posted for students. 4. Provides clear instructions for getting started. 5. Initiates a positive learning environment by having students. Introduce themselves. 6. Interacts with students as they	The instructor provides an overview of the course which includes most (5-6) of the following: 1. Instructor's introduction is present. 2. Provides an overview of the course. 3. A syllabus is posted for students. 4. Provides clear instructions for getting started. 5. Initiates a positive learning environment by having students introduce themselves. 6. Interacts with students as they introduce themselves.	The instructor provides an overview of the course which includes all (7) of the following: 1. Instructor's introduction is present. 2. Provides an overview of the course. 3. A syllabus is posted for students. 4. Provides clear instructions for getting started. 5. Initiates a positive learning environment by having students introduce themselves. 6. Interacts with students as they introduce themselves. 7. Instructor's contact information is available.	The course introduction meets all of the following: 1. Instructor's introduction is present. 2. Provides an overview of the course. 3. A printable syllabus is posted for students under the Syllabus tab. 4. Provides clear instructions to students on how to get started. 5. Initiates a positive learning environment by having students introduce themselves. 6. Interacts with students as they introduce themselves. 7. Instructor's contact information is available.  *Grading scale, grading policies (including late-work policy), and response time to students are included in syllabus.

<http://cte.clarksoncollege.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/OCER-for-Online-Courses.pdf>

There are five sections in the original rubric document. Here's an overview of each section.

OVERVIEW OF THE ONLINE COURSE EVALUATION RUBRIC (OCER)				
Course Overview & Introduction	Communication Tools & Interaction	Course Content & Resources	Assessment & Feedback	Instructional Design & Delivery
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Course Overview</li> <li>▪ Learning Objectives/ Competencies</li> <li>▪ Instructions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student-to-Student Interaction</li> <li>▪ Student-to-Instructor Interaction</li> <li>▪ Instructor Involvement</li> <li>▪ Group Work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Instructor to Content</li> <li>▪ Student to Content</li> <li>▪ Connections b/t Past &amp; Prior Learning</li> <li>▪ Content &amp; Its Delivery is Multi-Modal</li> <li>▪ Content Complies w/ Copyright Laws</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Multiple &amp; Varied Types of Assessment Activities</li> <li>▪ Assessment Methods Align w/ Learning Outcomes, Activities, &amp; Occur Frequently</li> <li>▪ Feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Design Consistency &amp; Functionality</li> <li>▪ Course Organization</li> <li>▪ Organization of Units, Topics, etc.</li> <li>▪ Accessibility</li> </ul>

## Conclusion

When creating your very own Virtual Student Orientation Course for Online Success, please remember to do so in a planned, purposeful manner. Clearly define goals around what you want students to know and be able to do in their regular online courses, and don't forget to evaluate the course at the end of the experience. This will help you figure out ways in which you can improve course design features and experiences which are essential to student success.

## Time to Reflect

As always, I like to end my trainings by emphasizing a growth mindset and, therefore, ask you to take what you have learned one step further.

**Change** how you look at virtual instruction. Look beyond the constraints of a physical classroom. Be sure to set up a Virtual Student Orientation Course that mirrors your online courses.

**Redesign** your virtual intake/registration process to include a VSO Course that will familiarize students with the online tools they will need for successful completion of their online courses. Make sure that you provide plenty of opportunities for students to practice navigating through different platforms, downloading and uploading assignments, taking quizzes, participating in breakout room activities and conversation posts, and engaging in meaningful virtual activities that support an active learning community online.

**Review** all of the identified data parameters for your VSO Course. Share this information with teachers, administrators and district personnel and become an expert on what works and doesn't work in your virtual classes. Have round-table discussions with your administrative team and share the placement, instructional, and promotional options for online classes provided in this training.

**Reflect and Make a Change.** Finally, ask yourself, "What is working especially well in my virtual classroom, and what is not?" Hold virtual data chats with your students regularly and be sure to continuously re-evaluate the effectiveness of your VSO Course. Share your students' success with other teachers so that they too can contribute to the continued improvement of this course and be proactive in implementing changes to constantly improve its quality as well as the level of online success experienced by your students.

# Appendix A

## VSO Course Checklist (Discussion Points for VSO Course Development)

CHECKLIST FOR CREATING A SUCCESSFUL VIRTUAL ORIENTATION PROGRAM						
GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS	COURSE CONSIDERATIONS	VSO COURSE CONTENT		VSO COURSE ACCESS	ONGOING SUPPORT	ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
<b>TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Hardware Requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Software Requirements  <b>ENROLLMENT &amp; PROGRAM ACCESS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Enrollment Process <input type="checkbox"/> Cost/Payment <input type="checkbox"/> VSO Course Access (Cheat Note)	<b>VSO COURSE LOCATION</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Face-to-face <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid <input type="checkbox"/> Transition (F-T-F to Virtual)  <b>COURSE MODALITY</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Synchronous Components <input type="checkbox"/> Asynchronous Components  <b>INSTRUCTIONAL PLATFORM</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Primary Platform (Canvas, Teams, etc.?) <input type="checkbox"/> Plan B (Zoom?)  <b>CONCURRENT COMMUNICATION PLAN</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Identify concurrent methods of communication in case of technical issues	<b>HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Laptop, desktop <input type="checkbox"/> Tablet <input type="checkbox"/> Cell phone  <b>SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Main LMS <input type="checkbox"/> Plan B, C, ...Platforms (cell apps, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> CAI (Digital workbooks, etc.)  <b>CONCURRENT COMMUNICATION PLAN</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Cell, text, WhatsApp, Facetime, School/personal email, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Links to Plan B LMS  <b>OVERVIEW OF PRIMARY LMS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Synchronous Components <input type="checkbox"/> Asynchronous components  <b>REQUIRED VIRTUAL ACCOUNTS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Create all additional virtual accounts for online course <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure access	<b>NAVIGATING ALL ONLINE COURSE COMPONENTS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Identify all synchronous components <input type="checkbox"/> Identify all asynchronous components <input type="checkbox"/> Practice navigating through all synchronous/asynchronous components <input type="checkbox"/> Include multiple synchronous/asynchronous practice activities  <b>STUDENT ASSESSMENT</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Oral Screening <input type="checkbox"/> Standardized Testing (CASAS/TABE) <input type="checkbox"/> Publisher Placement Test(s)  <b>PLACEMENT &amp; ENROLLMENT IN ONLINE COURSE</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Data chat <input type="checkbox"/> Identify and register in appropriate course & functional level <input type="checkbox"/> Registration process (streamline to avoid frustration) <input type="checkbox"/> Course reporting date (start/end dates) <input type="checkbox"/> Online course syllabus (course outline, requirements, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Instructional Framework for online course (greater structure = greater level of student success)	<b>ENROLLMENT</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Registration requirements/process (virtual or physical, cost, payment method, required documentation)  <b>INITIAL VSO COURSE ACCESS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Contact via phone, email, text? <input type="checkbox"/> Provided instruction cheat note? <input type="checkbox"/> Provided link(s)?	<b>ONGOING TECH SUPPORT</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Scheduled tech support hours <input type="checkbox"/> Assigned tech support personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Open access to VSO Course  <b>ONGOING ACADEMIC SUPPORT</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Tutoring hours <input type="checkbox"/> Scheduled weekly reviews <input type="checkbox"/> CAI programs (Burlington English, TABE/GED Academy, digital workbooks, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> On-site lab hours <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual lab hours	<b>INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Topic notes <input type="checkbox"/> Charts <input type="checkbox"/> Additional resources section on LMS  <b>ACTIVITIES RESOURCES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Enrichment activities <input type="checkbox"/> Project-based activities

## Appendix B

Sample Course Syllabus (Course syllabus excerpt below is from an ABE combined class (Reading & Language levels E & M) from Miami-Dade County Public Schools.)

### ABE E & M Course Syllabus

#### Instructor Information:

**Instructor:** Andres Novo  
**Email:** 319195@dadeschools.net  
**WhatsApp:** 786-716-9254  
**Office Hours:** Fridays, 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

#### Online Access Links:

Canvas: <https://canvas.instructure.com/login/canvas>  
Zoom: <https://dadeschools.zoom.us/j/93124087297?pwd=NmZMQWExdTmVUYxM21CSFkyZXdQQT09>

#### Required Materials:

**Text:** TABE Language Essentials. TABE Reading Essentials  
**Software:** TABE 11/12 Academy (provided by Miami Sunset)

#### Instructional Framework:

##### Monday – Thursday Activities:

Coffee Chat  
Close Reading  
Breakout Rooms  
TABE Competency Instruction  
Peer Review  
Pronunciation Practice  
TABE Academy – BluAppl DI Rotations

##### Friday Activities:

TABE Competency Instruction  
Dictation  
Pronunciation Focus  
Confusing Words in English  
In America: All About Idiomatic Expressions  
Student Presentations  
English Games / Student Competitions

#### Minimum Requirements for Course Completion:

**Virtual Class Attendance:** Minimum of 5 hours of attendance per week during scheduled class times  
**BluAppl:** Minimum 70% Mastery of Competencies Listed on BluAppl Individualized Plan  
**TABE Academy:** Minimum of 3 hours on TABE Academy outside of scheduled class times  
**Assignments:** Minimum 70% completion of all assignments

#### Calendar & Instructional Focus:

##### Notes:

- The TABE competencies listed on this syllabus and BluAppl are those which are tested and will be emphasized during instruction. Be sure that you have mastered these listed competencies. Refer to your BluAppl IISP for Reading and Language in order to determine which competencies to emphasize.
- Fridays are reserved for the following topics: Grammar, Pronunciation, Confusing Words, Idiomatic Expression, Video Activity, Student Presentation, Games/Competitions. More detailed information will be posted in Canvas under weekly activities.

##### Week 1: Aug. 26-27 (2 days)

TABE Competencies

- Language: Capitalization (E: 2.L.2.a/ 3.L.2.a) (M: 4.L.2.a). Italics (M: 5.L.2.d)
- Reading: Phonics and Word Recognition (E: 2.RF.3/ 2.RF.3.a/ 2.RF.3.b/ 2.RF.3.e/ 2.RF.3.f)

##### Week 2: Aug. 31 – Sept. 4 (5 days)

TABE Competencies

- Language: Apostrophes (E: 2.L.2.c/ 3.L.2.d). Commas (E: 2.L.2.b/ 3.L.2.b/ 3.L.2.c) (M: 4.L.2.b 5.L.2.a/5.L.2.b/ 5.L.2.c). Quotation Marks (E: 3.L.2.c) (M: 4.L.2.b)

## Appendix C

### Sample Instructional Framework for a 3-hour Online ABE Class

Monday – Thursday Activities	
Activity Type:	Duration:
Coffee Chat	10 min.
Close Reading	15 min.
Breakout Rooms	15 min.
TABE Competency Instruction	55 min.
Peer Review	20 min.
Pronunciation Practice	10 min.
TABE Academy – BluAppl DI Rotations	55 min.
Friday Activities	
Activity Type:	Duration:
TABE Competency Instruction	1 hr.
Dictation	5 min.
Pronunciation Focus	10 min.
Confusing Words in English	10 min.
In America: All About Idiomatic Expressions	15 min.
Student Presentations	60 min.
English Games/ Student Competitions	20 min.

**ABE A/B READING & LANGUAGE  
INSTRUCTIONAL FRAMEWORK**



# Appendix D

## Online Course Evaluation Rubric (OCER) for Online Courses

*(The copy of the Online Course Evaluation Rubric (OCER) for Online Courses included in the following pages was developed at Clarkson College.)*

# Online Course Evaluation Rubric (OCER) For Online Courses

Course Overview and Introduction	
<p><b>Criteria</b></p> <p><b>Course Overview</b></p>	<p><b>Emerging (1)</b> The instructor provides an overview of the course which includes 2 or less of the following: 1. Instructor's introduction is present. 2. Provides an overview of the course. 3. A syllabus is posted for students. 4. Provides clear instructions for getting started. 5. Initiates a positive learning environment by having students introduce themselves. 6. Interacts with students as they introduce themselves. 7. Instructor's contact information is available.</p> <p><b>Developing (2)</b> The instructor provides an overview of the course which includes some (3-4) of the following: 1. Instructor's introduction is present. 2. Provides an overview of the course. 3. A syllabus is posted for students. 4. Provides clear instructions for getting started. 5. Initiates a positive learning environment by having students. Introduce themselves. 6. Interacts with students as they introduce themselves. 7. Instructor's contact information is available.</p> <p><b>Accomplished (3)</b> The instructor provides an overview of the course which includes most (5-6) of the following: 1. Instructor's introduction is present. 2. Provides an overview of the course. 3. A syllabus is posted for students. 4. Provides clear instructions for getting started. 5. Initiates a positive learning environment by having students introduce themselves. 6. Interacts with students as they introduce themselves. 7. Instructor's contact information is available.</p> <p><b>Exemplary (4)</b> The instructor provides an overview of the course which includes all (7) of the following: 1. Instructor's introduction is present. 2. Provides an overview of the course. 3. A syllabus is posted for students. 4. Provides clear instructions for getting started. 5. Initiates a positive learning environment by having students introduce themselves. 6. Interacts with students as they introduce themselves. 7. Instructor's contact information is available.</p> <p><b>Best Practices</b> The course introduction meets all of the following: 1. Instructor's introduction is present. 2. Provides an overview of the course. 3. A printable syllabus is posted for students under the Syllabus tab. 4. Provides clear instructions to students on how to get started. 5. Initiates a positive learning environment by having students introduce themselves. 6. Interacts with students as they introduce themselves. 7. Instructor's contact information is available.  *Grading scale, grading policies (including late-work policy), and response time to students are included in syllabus.</p>
<p><b>Learning Objectives/ Outcomes/ Competencies</b></p>	<p><b>Some (51-84%)</b> learning objectives, outcomes, or competencies are measurable and clearly stated. They emphasize the</p> <p><b>Most (85-99%)</b> learning objectives, outcomes, or competencies are measurable and clearly stated. They emphasize the</p> <p><b>All (100%)</b> learning objectives, outcomes, or competencies are measurable and clearly stated. They emphasize the application of knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes</p> <p>1. Learning objectives, outcomes, or competencies refer to what the student should achieve in a particular module, focus, unit, week and course. 2. Learning objectives, outcomes, or competencies are provided in syllabus and at the beginning of each module, focus, unit, or week.</p>

	emphasize the application of knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes within the course. They are clearly stated, but in less than 50% of the module, focus, unit, or week.	application of knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes within the course. They are clearly stated in most (51-84%) module, focus, unit, or week accordingly.	application of knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes within the course. They are clearly stated in most (85-99%) modules, foci, units, or weeks.	within the course. They are clearly stated in each module, focus, unit, or week.	3. Objectives/ outcomes/ competencies describe measurable outcomes related to knowledge, skills, competencies behaviors and/ or attitudes.  4. Objectives/ outcomes/ competencies are stated clearly and concisely. Students know what will be accomplished at the conclusion of each foci/unit/module. Objectives/ outcomes are based on Bloom's Taxonomy of learning, and are fully measurable.
Instructions	Few instructions or directions for assignments (50% or less) are clear and concise. Rubrics are not provided. Expectations of student performance are lacking for learning activities (discussions, assignments, quizzes, exams, etc.).	Some (51-84%) instructions or directions for assignments are clear and concise. Rubrics are rarely provided. Expectations of student performance are vague for learning activities (discussions, assignments, quizzes, exams, etc.).	Most (85-99%) instructions or directions for assignments are clear and concise. Rubrics are not provided consistently. Sometimes they are provided, but do not align with the assignment instructions. Expectations of student performance are generic for learning activities (discussions, assignments, quizzes, exams, etc.).	All (100%) instructions or directions for assignments are clear and concise. Rubrics align with the assignment instructions and provide guidance to the student. Expectations of student performance are clearly specified for learning activities (e.g., discussions, assignments, quizzes, exams, etc.).	Instructions for students may take various forms (e.g., narratives, bulleted lists, charts) and must be included for all activities (ex. Discussions, assignments, quizzes, exams, etc.). Students must be able to identify expectations of their performance/ and how the activity meets learning objectives/ outcomes. Rubrics must be easily accessible to students, and they must be encouraged to go over them before they start working on a particular task.
<b>Communication Tools and Interaction</b>					
Criteria	Emerging (1)	Developing (2)	Accomplished (3)	Exemplary (4)	Best Practices
Student-to-student interaction	Course lacks opportunities for student-to-student interaction within few (50% or less) of the modules/foci/unit/topic.	Course offers limited opportunities for student-to-student interaction within some (51-84%) modules/foci/unit/topic.	Course offers many opportunities for student-to-student interaction within most (85-99%) modules/foci/unit/topic.	Course offers ample opportunities for student-to-student interaction within all (100%) modules/foci/unit/topic.	Opportunities for student-to-student interaction provide students with the ability to build a learning community amongst students. A learning community can assist students in becoming familiar with one another and preparing for role assignment for a group project.  Examples of synchronous tools (real time) are webinars, conferences, and all other real-time collaboration tools.

Student-to-instructor interaction	Course lacks opportunities for student-to-instructor interaction within few (50% or less) of the modules/foci/unit/topic.	Course offers limited opportunities for student-to-instructor interaction within some (51-84%) of modules/foci/unit/topic.	Course offers many opportunities for student-to-instructor interaction within most (85-99%) of modules/foci/unit/topic.	Course offers ample opportunities for student-to-instructor interaction within all (100%) of modules/foci/unit/topic.	Examples of asynchronous tools are Blogs, Wikis, file-sharing websites/apps, student Groups, and Discussion threads (which is one of the easiest tools to manage, compared with other options), group projects, peer critiques, Google Docs, OneDrive, etc.
Instructor Involvement	No viewable involvement by the current instructor is presented and/ or only one or none of the following is provided: 1. Has an active role in course discussions 2. Provides weekly updates/announcements, 3. Provides feedback on assignments, 4. Offers videoconferencing sessions.	The instructor is engaged sporadically throughout the course and provides 2 of the following: 1. Has an active role in course discussions 2. Provides weekly updates/announcements, 3. Provides feedback on assignments, 4. Offers videoconferencing sessions.	The instructor is engaged frequently throughout the course and provides 3 of the following: 1. Has an active role in course discussions 2. Provides weekly updates/announcements, 3. Provides feedback on assignments, 4. Offers videoconferencing sessions.	The instructor is actively engaged consistently throughout the course and provides all of the following: 1. Has an active role in course discussions 2. Provides weekly updates/announcements, 3. Provides feedback on assignments, 4. Offers videoconferencing sessions.	Interaction between students and instructors helps to build credibility of the instructor with the student. Instructors should include a self-introduction, participate in discussions to provide guidance, encourage participation, provide detailed feedback on assignments and activities, offer open communication through email and/or provide virtual office hours (via webinars, conferences, or by phone). Instructor is an active participant in the course, a content expert and a resource for new information. Examples of instructor involvement include, but are not limited to: participation in discussions, weekly updates (announcements), detailed feedback in gradebook, emails to class or individual students, and/or videoconferencing sessions.



Group Work (if applicable)	A statement of the group's overall task is provided, with specific outcomes. One or none of the expectations for the following are included:	A statement of the group's overall task is provided, with specific outcomes. Most 3 expectations for the following are included:	A statement of the group's overall task is provided, with 4 expectations for the following are included:	One of the student learning outcomes is the ability to respectfully interact within a diverse society. Group work provides the student with the ability to collaborate, learn from the knowledge and skills of others, and to participate in an experience that will allow the student to develop and practice skills for the workplace. Thus, collaboration is a vital part of the learning process. Students must be given the opportunity to interact with their peers to find solutions to problems posed by the instructor.  Technologies that allow for student collaboration are widely available on the web. Some popular tools that can enhance the sense of community as well as to make the collaboration process seamless are for example: blogs, wikis, Google Drive, Office 365, file-sharing sites, and videoconferencing.					
Criteria	Instructor to Content	<b>Course Content and Resources</b>							
Emerging (1)	There are no opportunities for the student to make a connection between the instructor and the content within a few (50% or less) of the modules/foci/units/topics.	Developing (2)	There are some opportunities for the student to make a connection between the instructor and the content within 51-84% of the modules/foci/units/topics.	Accomplished (3)	There are many opportunities for the student to make a connection between the instructor and the content within most (85-99%) modules/foci/units/topics.	Exemplary (4)	There are ample opportunities for the student to make a clear connection between the instructor and the content within each (100%) modules/foci/units/topics.	Best Practices	Instructor to content refers to the opportunities for students to make a connection between instructor and content. Instructors are subject matter experts that have knowledge and experiences that are valuable to student learning. This connection can be displayed through lecture components such as narrated PowerPoints, PowerPoint presentations, audio lectures (podcast), video lectures, or text.
Instructor to Content	Instructor has not authored content, such as narrated lectures for all modules/foci/units/topics in courses where he or she has the ability to customize course content.	Instructor has authored content, such as narrated lectures for all modules/foci/units/topics in courses where he or she has the ability to customize course content.	Instructor has authored content, such as narrated lectures for all modules/foci/units/topics in courses where the instructor has the ability to customize course content.	Instructor has authored content, such as narrated lectures for all modules/foci/units/topics in courses where the instructor has the ability to customize course content.	Instructor has authored content, such as narrated lectures for all modules/foci/units/topics in courses where the instructor has the ability to customize course content.	Instructor has authored content, such as narrated lectures for all modules/foci/units/topics in courses where the instructor has the ability to customize course content.	Instructor has authored content, such as narrated lectures for all modules/foci/units/topics in courses where the instructor has the ability to customize course content.	Instructor has authored content, such as narrated lectures for all modules/foci/units/topics in courses where the instructor has the ability to customize course content.	Instructor has authored content, such as narrated lectures for all modules/foci/units/topics in courses where the instructor has the ability to customize course content.
Student to Content	There are very few opportunities for the student to connect	There are some opportunities for the student to connect	There are many opportunities for the student to connect and	There are ample opportunities for the student to connect and engage with	There are ample opportunities for the student to connect and engage with	There are ample opportunities for the student to connect and engage with	There are ample opportunities for the student to connect and engage with	There are ample opportunities for the student to connect and engage with	Student to content refers to the opportunities available for students to make a connection and to engage with content through activities, supplements, lectures (podcast), video lectures, or text.

	and engage with the content within 50% or less of the modules/foci/ units/ topics. Supplemental resources are not available.	and engage with the content within 51-84% of the modules/foci/ units/ topics. Supplemental resources are available for students but may not necessarily support learning outcomes.	engage with the content within most (85-99%) modules/foci/ units/ topics. Supplemental resources that support learning outcomes are available for students.	the content within all (100%) modules/foci/ units/ topics. Supplemental resources that support learning outcomes are available for students.	exercises, and assignments that students are required to complete and perhaps submit for instructor review, comment, or grading. Students are provided with targeted supplemental or supporting resources that extend beyond the course material to support learning, such as videos, formative assessment activities, links, interactions, self-graded exercises, etc.
Connection between past and prior learning	There are limited opportunities for the student to make a connection between past and prior learning within 50% or less of the module/focus/unit.	There are some opportunities for the student to make a connection between past and prior learning within 51-84% of the module/focus/unit.	There are many opportunities for the student to make a connection between past and prior learning within most (85-99%) module/focus/unit.	There are ample opportunities for the student to make a clear connection between past and prior learning within each (100%) module/focus/unit.	From a constructive perspective, setting the stage for new learning involves making a connection from past learning to present learning (unit announcement, weekly introduction area, and lecture). This allows students to build upon prior knowledge, and to reflect upon their previously acquired skills or knowledge.
Content and its delivery is multi-modal	Course provides very few types of content. For example, visual, textual, kinesthetic, auditory activities, etc. to enhance student learning and engagement within 50% or less of the modules/foci/units.	Course provides some types of content. For example, visual, textual, kinesthetic, auditory activities, etc. to enhance student learning and engagement within 51-84% of the modules/foci/units.	Course provides varied types of content. For example, visual, textual, kinesthetic, auditory activities, etc. to enhance student learning and engagement within each (100%) module/focus/unit.	Course provides varied types of content. For example, visual, textual, kinesthetic, auditory activities, etc. to enhance student learning and engagement within each (100%) module/focus/unit.	Delivering content in many different formats satisfies different learning-style preferences, accommodates students with disabilities, offers students choices of how to interact with the content, and most notably strengthens retention. Examples of multi-modal delivery include lecture notes with visual enhancements, PowerPoint presentations with narration, audio, video, simulations, etc. Students have opportunities to read, write, listen, watch, handle, discuss, judge, etc. whenever appropriate.
Content complies with copyright laws	Few (50% or less) of the graphics, image and other media components that are embedded into the course adhere to Fair Use Guidelines, have	Some (51-84%) graphics, image and other media components that are embedded into the course adhere to Fair Use Guidelines, have	Most (85-99%) graphics, image and other media components that are embedded into the course adhere to Fair Use Guidelines, have	All (100%) graphics, image and other media components that are embedded into the course adhere to Fair Use Guidelines, have permission or are properly cited.	Graphics, images and other media components have permission for use from creator or have been properly cited, or used according to Fair Use Guidelines. Permission must be granted to convert copyrighted material from one format into another (e.g., converting a VHS tape into digital format). You can always link out to a website or a resource outside of the course.

	permission, or are properly cited.	permission, or are properly cited.	permission, or are properly cited.	permission, or are properly cited.		If you have adopted the textbook for that course, you may use all of the resources that are available with that textbook.
<b>Assessment and Feedback</b>						
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Emerging (1)</b>	<b>Developing (2)</b>	<b>Accomplished (3)</b>	<b>Exemplary (4)</b>	<b>Best Practices</b>	
Multiple and varied types of assessment activities	Limited assessment strategies utilized. There is only one type of assessment within the course.	Assessment strategies utilized to measure content knowledge, attitudes and skills. There are 2 different types of assessments within the course.	Multiple and diverse assessment strategies utilized to measure knowledge, skills and attitude. Ongoing strategies are used to measure content knowledge, attitudes and skills. There are 3 different types of assessments within the course.	Ongoing multiple assessment strategies utilized to measure content knowledge, attitudes and skills throughout the course. There are 4 or more different types of assessments within the course.	Multiple and varied types of assessment activities provide wider measurements of a diverse range of student preferences. For example, some students may not perform well during timed exams but are more comfortable with writing assignments. Options include discussions, group projects, self-check and practice quizzes, exams, peer evaluations, class surveys, reflections, journals, e-portfolios, etc.	
Assessment methods align with learning outcomes, activities, and occur frequently	Students are not provided with formative assessments to help them get ready for the summative piece(s). Assessment methods do not align with learning outcomes and/or activities and/or occur rarely throughout the course (midterm or final).	Students are provided with some of formative assessments to help them get ready for the summative piece(s). Assessment methods sometimes align with learning outcomes and activities, and occur sporadically throughout the course.	Students are provided with a variety of formative assessments to help them get ready for the summative piece(s). Assessment methods generally align with learning outcomes and activities, and occur frequently throughout the course.	Students are provided with a variety of formative assessments to help them get ready for the summative piece(s). Assessment methods specifically align with learning outcomes and activities, and occur consistently throughout the course.	Assessment methods must be relevant, accurate and align with learning outcomes. Frequent assessments provide the most accurate measurement of student comprehension. Assessments spaced throughout the term also ensure that the student is able to gauge his/her own learning focused on learning outcomes. Formative assessments, such as practice quizzes, interactions, presentations, etc. where feedback is provided must be present throughout the course. This helps students master the content progressively, and gives them a fair opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge through summative evaluation pieces (such as midterms and final exams).	
<b>Feedback</b>	Opportunities for students to receive	Opportunities for students to receive	Opportunities for students to receive	Ample opportunities for students to receive feedback	Feedback in online learning provides students with insight into what the instructor thinks about the work	



	feedback on their performance are infrequent and sporadic. Only a few or none of the assignments, with the exception of quizzes and exams, contain individualized comments in the online gradebook. Rubrics are provided for a few or none of the graded assignments and/or do not outline specific criteria with levels of expectations.	feedback on their performance occur frequently. Some assignments, with the exception of quizzes and exams, contain extensive, individualized comments in the online gradebook. Rubrics are provided for some graded assignments and outline basic/ specific criteria with levels of expectations.	feedback on their performance occur in a timely manner (soon after learning activities have taken place). Most assignments, with the exception of quizzes and exams, contain extensive, individualized comments. Rubrics are provided for most graded assignments and outline general/ specific criteria with levels of expectations.	on their performance occur in a consistent timely manner (soon after learning activities have taken place). All assignments contain extensive, individualized comments, with the exception of quizzes and exams. Rubrics are provided for all graded assignments and outline specific criteria with levels of expectations.	that the student is doing or has done. It is a tool that provides the student with instructions or guidelines for improvement. Feedback can be provided through SpeedGrader.  Rubrics provide feedback that is detailed and consistent. As an instructor, you can provide feedback via a rubric by selecting the areas according to the criteria and scale.  Ensure that students know how, when, and where to access your feedback and scoring.  Graded assignments are assessment items that have a point value or must be manually graded. Some examples include quizzes, exams, discussions, essays, projects and papers.
<b>Instructional Design and Delivery</b>					
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Emerging (1)</b>	<b>Developing (2)</b>	<b>Accomplished (3)</b>	<b>Exemplary (4)</b>	<b>Best Practices</b>
Design Consistency and Functionality	A few (50% or less) of the course content is visually and functionally consistent throughout the course. Font, headings (section identifiers) and content (PowerPoints) are not formatted and displayed within course or a few (50% or less) of the foci/units/modules. Most images used are irrelevant to the foci, units or modules, and help	Some (51-84%) course content is visually and functionally consistent throughout the course. Font, headings (section identifiers) and content (PowerPoints) are formatted and displayed consistently throughout some (50-84%) foci/units/modules. Some Images used are relevant to the foci, units or modules, and help	Most (85-99%) course content is visually and functionally consistent throughout the course. Font, headings (section identifiers) and content (PowerPoints) are formatted and displayed consistently throughout most (85-99%) foci/units/modules. Most Images used are relevant, and help provide a professional look to the course. Some lectures and/or multimedia elements	All (100%) course content is visually and functionally consistent throughout the course. Font, headings (section identifiers), banners, and content (PowerPoints) are formatted and displayed consistently throughout all (100%) foci/units/modules. All Images used are relevant, and help provide a professional look to the course. No lectures and/or multimedia elements are flash based (.SWF files).	Placement of elements and presentation consistency refer to the design of the course and the pages in the course that contain instructional elements (e.g. chapter, unit, module, week, etc.).  Font type, size, color and spacing facilitate readability and minimize distractions for the student. Formatting and color coding serve instructional purposes to communicate key points, concept relationships and etc. Examples include: URLs that link to the correct website, graphics display correctly and include alt text, grammar and spelling are correct, interactive technologies (blogs, wiki, animations) are working. It is also recommended to underline a word or phrase only when there is a hyperlink associated to it.  Do not use color references to convey meaning. For example, "complete the section in red." Some students may not be able to discern color differences efficiently.



		diminish the professional look to the course. All lectures and/or multimedia elements are Flash based (.SWF files).	provide a professional look to the course. Most lectures and/or multimedia elements are Flash based (.SWF files).	are Flash based (.SWF files).		Use of images or graphics must be chosen wisely to help support learning, rather than distracting from the course outcomes. Avoid pixelated or blurry images, as well as graphics that have no connection with your content. Multimedia elements should not be Flash based (e.g., .SWF files). Flash-based content will be completely unsupported in all web browsers by 2020.
Course Organization	Less than 50% of course content has been logically organized. Course layout does not appear to be complete.	Course structure and flow is unclear. Only 51-84% of course content is organized or sequenced logically to support learning outcomes.	Course structure is somewhat intuitive but requires some exploring to determine flow of the course. 85-99% of course content is sequenced logically to support learning outcomes.	Course structure is easy to navigate and 100% of course content is organized in a logical manner that promotes progressive learning or construction of knowledge.		Content is organized and logically sequenced to support learning outcomes. The course navigation displays only the necessary course items from the student perspective. For example, Home, Announcements, Syllabus, Modules, Grades, People, and other necessary tools as applicable. The student must be able to discern relationships between parts of the course and how those parts assist the student in meeting learning outcomes. Navigation is a mixture of graphic and editorial organizational cues supplied by the graphic design of the course. Specifically, navigation is the consistent and predictable set of navigation methods, buttons and headings that allow learners to move logically and easily between areas of the course and topics. To avoid frustration, students must be able to easily navigate through the course and progress in a sequential and logical fashion.
Organization of Foci/ Units/ Topics	50% or less of the Foci/ Units/Modules have content that is predictable and organized in a manner so that students are clear on the resources,	Some (51-84%) Foci/ Units/Modules have content that is predictable and organized in a manner so that students are clear on the resources,	Most (85-99%) Foci/ Units/Modules have content that is predictable and organized in a manner so that students are clear on the resources, assignments and	All (100%) Foci/ Units/Modules have content that is predictable and organized in a manner so that students are clear on the resources, assignments and assessment for that foci/		Each unit must have a logical and predictable sequence for the learner to know where to start, and how it will flow. All content items are labeled accurately to make course outline more intuitive (e.g., Module 1: Lecture, Module 1: Discussion, etc.).

Accessibility	<p>assignments and assessment for that focu/unit/module. 50% or more content items are not labeled accurately.</p> <p>Between 0 - 40% of the course resources are fully accessible to all students and meet ADA requirements.</p>	<p>assignments and assessment for that focu/unit/module. Some content items are labeled accurately.</p> <p>Between 41 -60% of the course resources are fully accessible to all students and meet ADA requirements.</p>	<p>assessment for that focu/unit/module. Most content items are labeled accurately.</p> <p>Between 61 -89% of the course resources are fully accessible to all students and meet ADA requirements.</p>	<p>unit/module. All content items are labeled accurately.</p> <p>90% or above of the course resources are fully accessible to all students and meet ADA requirements.</p>	<p>Online content is designed to never exclude learners from interacting with it. Federal and State laws require web pages and content to be accessible to all people. Designing course content and web pages for a large audience with multiple learning styles is also a sound online instructional technique. Accessibility for students with disabilities, particularly as outlined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 508 requires online courses to be accessible to students with special needs (physical disabilities, learning disorders and etc.). Efforts must be made to accommodate students with special needs and may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A text equivalent for every non-text element is provided (e.g. images contain descriptive text (alt text), Transcripts, etc.)</li> <li>• Captioning available for audio portions of multimedia presentations (narrated PPTs, animation or videos).</li> <li>• Row and column headers are identified in data tables.</li> <li>• Links that are self-describing and meaningful (ex. "American Heart Association" with hyperlink, not "click here").</li> </ul> <p>Please visit CTE for assistance with any concerns or questions that you may have with accessible content.</p>
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## Websites

**Clarkson College:** *Online Course Evaluation Rubric (OCER) for Online Courses*

<http://cte.clarksoncollege.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/OCER-for-Online-Courses.pdf>

**LearnUpon:**

<https://www.learnupon.com/blog/synchronous-learning-asynchronous-learning/>

**Purdue University Global:** <https://www.purdueglobal.edu/>

**Florida IPDAE.** <http://www.floridaipdae.org/>

## Acknowledgements

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