

## Nicholls State University/QM Rubric Detail

**General Standard 1:** The overall design of the course is made clear to the student at the beginning of the course.

Standard	Points	Annotation
1.1 Instructions make clear how to get started and where to find various course components.		<p>Instructions provide a general course overview, present the schedule for activities, guide the new student to explore the course website, and indicate what to do first, rather than or in addition to listing detailed navigational instructions for the whole course.</p> <p>Instructors may choose to incorporate some of this information in the course syllabus. In this case, students should be directed to the syllabus at the beginning of the course. A useful idea is a “Read Me First” or “Start Here” button or icon on the course home page, linking students to start-up information.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A course “tour”</li> <li>2. Clear statements about how to get started in the course</li> <li>3. A “scavenger hunt” assignment that leads students through an exploration of the different areas of the course</li> <li>4. A graphical table or diagram that depicts the relationship between the online and face-to-face portions of a hybrid course</li> </ol> <p><i>Hybrid Courses:</i> Instructions in the online classroom make it apparent to students that the course is a hybrid course with both online and face-to-face components and activities. Instructions specify the requirements for participation in both the online and face-to-face portions of the course. The introductory information clearly states when and where students should participate each week, and a structured set of topics and schedule is provided for each face-to-face meeting.</p>
1.2 A statement introduces the student to the purpose of the course and to its components; in the case of a hybrid course, the statement clarifies the relationship between the face-to-face and online components.		<p>The instructor’s statement gives the new student an idea of how the learning process is structured—including schedule, communication modes, and types of activities—and how student performance will be evaluated. These features are often included in the course syllabus, but they may also be included in an introductory or welcome document.</p> <p>Look for some or all of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The course schedule (self-paced or following a set calendar, etc.)</li> <li>2. Course sequencing, such as a linear or random order</li> <li>3. Types of activities the student will be required to complete (written assignments, online self-tests, participation in the discussion board, group work, etc.)</li> <li>4. Fully developed course calendar with assignment, activity, and test due dates. In the case of a hybrid course, the calendar should fully cover both the online and face-to-face portions of the course and specify the dates and times when face-to-face class meetings will be held.</li> <li>5. Preferred mode of communication with the instructor (email, discussion board, etc.)</li> <li>6. Preferred mode of communication with other students</li> <li>7. Testing procedures (online, proctored, etc.)</li> <li>8. Procedure for submission of electronic assignments</li> </ol> <p><i>Hybrid Courses:</i> Instructors should explain the purpose of both the online and face-to-face portions of the course, and how they complement and reinforce each other. The</p>

**General Standard 2:** Learning objectives are clearly stated and explained. They assist students in focusing their effort in the course.

2.1 The course learning		Measurable course learning objectives precisely describe what students are to gain from instruction, and then guide instructors to accurately assess student accomplishment. Objectives should describe student performance in specific, observable terms. If this specificity is not
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<p>objectives describe outcomes that are measurable.</p>	<p>possible (e.g., internal cognition, affective changes), check for clear indications that the learning objective is meaningfully assessed. Note that at some institutions, learning objectives may be referred to as learning outcomes.</p> <p>Examples of measurable objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Select appropriate tax strategies for different financial and personal situations.</li> <li>2. Develop a comprehensive, individualized wellness action program focused on overcoming a sedentary life-style.</li> <li>3. Describe the relationship between the components of an ecosystem.</li> <li>4. Explain the factors that contribute to economic inflation.</li> </ol> <p>In a course in which students are expected to demonstrate analytical skills and/or ability to express themselves effectively in writing or in other forms of communication, the learning objectives should include reference to these objectives in addition to objectives that relate to mastery of content.</p> <p>In addition to measurable objectives, a course may have objectives or desired outcomes that are not measurable, such as increased awareness, sensitivity, or interest in certain issues or subjects, but these do not substitute for measurable objectives.</p> <p>Special situations: In some cases (check the Instructor Worksheet), the course objectives are institutionally mandated and the individual instructor does not have the authority to change them. If the institutionally-mandated learning objectives are not measurable, then please be sure to make note of it in the “comments” box. Write specific suggestions for improvement so that the institution has the information it needs to improve the objectives. If the course objectives are institutionally mandated, then the reviewer may need to consider Standard 2.1 in conjunction with Standard 2.2 as follows:</p> <p>Standard 2.1 is considered as being MET under the following circumstances:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The course objectives are measurable, whether set by the institution or faculty member.</li> <li>2. The institutionally-mandated course objectives are not measurable, but the faculty-driven module/unit-level objectives are measurable.</li> </ol> <p>Standard 2.1 is NOT MET under the following circumstances:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There are no course-level objectives.</li> <li>2. The course-level objectives set by the instructor are not measurable.</li> <li>3. The institutionally-mandated, course-level objectives are not measurable, and the faculty-driven module/unit objectives are either not measurable or not present.</li> </ol> <p><b>Alignment:</b> The concept of alignment is intended to convey the idea that critical course components should work together to ensure that students achieve the desired learning outcomes. Measurable course and module/unit-level learning objectives form the basis of alignment in a course. Other elements of the course, including those addressed in Standards 2.1 through 2.5, 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, and 6.1, should contribute to the accomplishment of these objectives. <i>It may not be possible to complete the course review if measurable learning objectives are not present. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that the review team chair communicate with the instructor to resolve this issue early in the process.</i></p>
<p>2.2 The module/unit learning objectives describe outcomes that are measurable and consistent</p>	<p>Measurable module- or unit-level learning objectives are important. They precisely describe the specific competencies, skills, and knowledge that students should be able to master and demonstrate at regular intervals throughout the course. They provide students with greater focus and clarity of learning expectations and outcomes on a weekly, modular, or unit basis.</p> <p>Module or unit-level objectives may be written by the instructor or come from the textbook. Regardless of origin, these objectives should be prominently stated in course materials, such as the syllabus, so that they are accessible to the student from within the online classroom. Module/unit learning objectives enable instructors to accurately assess student accomplishment.</p>

<p>with the course-level objectives.</p>	<p>Objectives should describe student performance in specific, observable terms. Note that at some institutions, learning objectives may be referred to as learning outcomes.</p> <p>The module/unit-level objectives should be consistent with the course-level objectives. The module/unit objectives may either be implicitly or explicitly consistent with the course-level objectives. For example, the module/unit objective “<i>Students will write sentences that demonstrate correct use of commas, semicolons, and periods.</i>” is implicitly consistent with the course objective “<i>Students will demonstrate a mastery of rules of punctuation.</i>”</p> <p><b>Alignment:</b> See the statement in the annotations to Standard 2.1.</p>
<p>2.3 All learning objectives are stated clearly and written from the students’ perspective.</p>	<p>The learning objectives are stated clearly in the online classroom for all course delivery formats. The learning objectives are written in a way that allows students to easily grasp their meaning and the learning outcomes expected of students. The use of educational jargon, confusing terms, unnecessarily complex language, and puzzling syntax is avoided. The learning objectives are clearly stated by the instructor, verbally during face-to-face meetings, if applicable, and electronically in the online classroom.</p> <p>As a reviewer, consider both the course and module/unit learning objectives in your assessment of this standard.</p>
<p>2.4 Instructions to students on how to meet the learning objectives are adequate and stated clearly.</p>	<p>Instructions may take various forms (e.g., narratives, bulleted lists, charts) and may appear at different levels within the course, such as module-based or in weekly assignment sheets. Instructions are stated clearly, are complete, and are provided electronically in the online classroom.</p> <p>As a reviewer, consider both the course and module/unit learning objectives in your assessment of this standard.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Module-based or weekly assignment pages in narrative, bulleted list, or chart form comprise a list of steps that guide the student in meeting learning objectives for each week.</li> <li>2. Information indicates which learning activities, resources, assignments, and assessments support the learning objectives.</li> </ol>
<p><b>General Standard 3:</b> Assessment strategies use established ways to measure effective learning, evaluate student progress by reference to stated learning objectives, and are designed to be integral to the learning process.</p>	
<p>3.1 The types of assessments selected measure the stated learning objectives and are consistent with course activities and resources.</p>	<p><b>Alignment:</b> Course assessments should align with the course and module objectives of the course (see Standards 2.1 and 2.2) by measuring the accomplishment of those objectives. It should be clear that the assessments can be successfully completed if students have met the objectives embedded in the course materials and learning activities. Note: at some institutions, learning objectives may be called learning outcomes.</p> <p>Examples of objective/assessment alignment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A problem analysis evaluates critical thinking skills.</li> <li>2. A multiple-choice quiz verifies vocabulary knowledge.</li> <li>3. A composition assesses writing skills.</li> </ol> <p>Examples of inconsistent alignment between learning objectives and assessment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The objective is to be able to “write a persuasive essay,” but the assessment is a multiple-choice test.</li> <li>2. The objective is to “demonstrate discipline-specific information literacy,” and the assessment is a rubric-scored term paper; but students are not given any practice with information literacy skills on smaller assignments.</li> </ol> <p>Some assessments may be geared toward meeting outcomes other than those stated in the</p>

	<p>course; for example, a course may have a writing component as part of a college-wide “Writing Across the Disciplines” requirement. In that case, the reviewer should suggest including within the course the objectives that reflect the college-wide requirement.</p> <p>Special situations: In some cases (check the Instructor Worksheet), the course objectives are institutionally mandated and the individual instructor does not have the authority to change them. For such cases, consider instead the module/unit-level objectives to assess and score Standard 3.1.</p>
<p>3.2 The course grading policy is stated clearly.</p>	<p>A clear, written statement fully explains how the course grades are computed. The points, percentages, and weights for each component of the course grade are clearly stated. The relationship(s) between points, percentages, weights, and letter grades are explained. The instructor’s policy on late submissions is clearly stated.</p> <p>Review the clarity of the explanation and presentation to the student, not the simplicity or complexity of a given grading system itself. A relatively complex grading system can still be unambiguous and easy to understand.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A list of all activities, tests, etc. that will determine the students’ final grades</li> <li>2. An explanation of the relationship between the final course letter grade and the student’s accumulated points and/or percentages</li> <li>3. If points and percentages are used, an explanation of the relationship between these two</li> </ol>
<p>3.3 Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of students’ work and participation.</p>	<p>Students are provided with a clear and meaningful description of the criteria that will be used to evaluate their work and participation in the course. These criteria are stated up-front at the beginning of the course. The description and/or statement of criteria provide students with clear guidance on the expectations and required components of work and participation. The criteria give students all the information they need to know how a grade on an assignment or activity will be calculated.</p> <p>As a reviewer, you will ascertain that the criteria used to evaluate students’ performance align with the course objectives and contribute to students’ future growth and improvement. Note, however, that as a reviewer you are not being asked to look for and evaluate the instructor’s specific feedback to students in Standard 3.3. Your focus is the nature of the criteria, not their application.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Evidence that the instructor has stated the criteria for evaluation of students’ paper and assignments, such as rubrics or a list of criteria with associated point values</li> <li>2. A description of the how students’ participation in discussions will be graded, including the number of required postings per week; the criteria for evaluating the originality and quality of students’ comments and their responsiveness to other students’ comments; and grade credit they can expect for varying levels of performance</li> </ol>
<p><b>General Standard 4:</b> Instructional materials are sufficiently comprehensive to achieve stated course objectives and learning outcomes and are prepared by qualified persons competent in their fields.</p>	
<p>4.1 The instructional materials contribute to the achievement of the stated course and module/unit learning</p>	<p><b>Alignment:</b> The instructional materials used in the course should align with the course and module learning objectives of the course (see Standards 1.1 and 2.2) by contributing to the achievement of those objectives and by integrating effectively with the tools and media selected for their delivery to the student (see Standard 6.1).</p> <p>Course materials, resources, and learning objectives align in a clear and direct way. The course materials and resources enable students to achieve the stated learning objectives. As a reviewer, consider both the course and module/unit learning objectives in your assessment of this standard. Note: at some institutions, learning objectives may be called learning outcomes.</p>

<p>objectives.</p>	<p>Materials other than standard textbooks, monographs, and articles published by recognized publishers are prepared by the instructor or instructional designers skilled in preparing materials for distance learning.</p> <p>Decisions on this standard may be particularly difficult for individual reviewers whose expertise is not in the course discipline. Reviewers should consult with the team SME (subject matter expert) and use common sense to determine if the instructional materials support the learning objectives.</p> <p>Normally textbooks are not provided to reviewers because of cost and logistical limitations. Many publishers provide web links to their textbooks, and reviewers may wish to consult these links. In evaluating the course against this standard, reviewers will work closely with the SME on the team.</p> <p>In some advanced undergraduate courses and graduate courses, no textbook(s) are assigned. Reviewers will need to consider bibliographies and webliographies provided by the instructor, or, in some cases, developed by students themselves, following guidelines provided by the instructor.</p> <p>Special situations: In some cases (check the Instructor Worksheet), the course objectives are institutionally mandated and the individual instructor does not have the authority to change them. For such cases, consider instead the module/unit-level objectives to assess and score Standard 4.1.</p>
<p>4.2 The relationship between the instructional materials and the learning activities is clearly explained to the student.</p>	<p>Students can easily determine the purpose of all content, materials, resources, technologies, and instructional methods used in the course, and how each will help them achieve the stated learning objectives. It is clearly stated which materials are required and which are recommended resources. (See Standard 5.1 for a description of learning activities.)</p> <p>For example, a course may be richly garnished with external links to Internet resources, but it is not clear whether those resources are for background information or additional personal enrichment, or if they are required for an assignment.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Links to external websites indicate the purpose of the links or are completely self-evident.</li><li>2. The function of animated games or exercises is clearly explained or is completely self-evident.</li></ol> <p>If various instructional materials (books, manuals, videos, CD ROMs, computer software, etc.) are used in the course, the purpose of their use and relationship to one another should be clearly explained to students. Reviewers should determine if such diversely formatted course materials are integrated well enough to be useful to the uninitiated student. The integration of these materials may be considered both physically and contextually. Students should clearly understand the learning objectives associated with the materials.</p> <p>For example, a course requires students to use the following materials: a textbook divided into chapters, video segments ordered by topics, a website organized around specific skills, and a tutorial CD-ROM that has an opening menu consisting of “practice quizzes,” “images,” and “audio examples.” Consider whether it would be clear to students the order in which they should approach these varied materials, how each is related to the core content and learning objectives, and how the materials are related to one another.</p> <p>In some advanced undergraduate and graduate courses, in which students are expected to find their own learning materials, the instructor should post guidelines that assist the student in identifying relevant materials and distinguish between core and supplementary materials and between scholarly and non-scholarly sources for academic writing. Reviewers should determine whether these guidelines satisfy the standard.</p> <p>Decisions on this standard may be difficult for individual reviewers whose expertise is not in the course discipline. Reviewers should consult with the team SME (subject matter expert) and use common sense to determine if the materials are appropriate to this course.</p>

**General Standard 5:** Meaningful interaction between the instructor and students, among students, and between students and course materials is employed to motivate students and foster intellectual commitment and personal development.

<p>5.1 The learning activities promote the achievement of the stated learning objectives.</p>	<p><b>Alignment:</b> Learning activities should align with the course and module objectives of the course (see Standards 2.1 and 2.2) by engaging students in activities that directly contribute to the achievement of those objectives and integrating smoothly with the tools and media (Standard 6.1) that enable these activities.</p> <p>The purpose of learning activities is to facilitate the student’s achievement of the stated objectives.</p> <p>The learning activities should actively engage the learner with the course content. Learning activities are varied in order to provide reinforcement and mastery in multiple ways and to accommodate multiple learning styles. Activities may include reading assignments, student presentations, science labs, class discussions, case studies, role playing, simulation exercise, practice quizzes, tests, etc.</p> <p>Examples of mismatches between activities and objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The objective requires students to be able to deliver a persuasive speech, but the activities in the course do not include practice of that skill.</li> <li>2. The objective is “Prepare each budget within a master budget and explain their importance in the overall budgeting process.” The students review information about this in their texts and observe budgets worked out by the instructor, but they themselves produce only one of the several budgets.</li> </ol> <p><i>Hybrid Courses:</i> In courses that use both the online and face-to-face settings, the learning activities that occur in these two settings should be connected by a common thread or theme and should be mutually reinforcing. The connection and reinforcement are made clear to students. For example, the different parts of a particular activity might be sequenced in an alternating way in online and face-to-face meetings of the course.</p> <p><i>Special Situations:</i> When course objectives are institutionally mandated, the reviewer should refer to module/unit objectives to assess standard 5.1.</p>
<p>5.2 Learning activities foster instructor-student, content-student, and if appropriate to the course, student-student interaction.</p>	<p>Interactions between the instructor and the students are designed to facilitate students’ understanding and mastery of the learning objectives. These interactions may be supportive (welcome and introduction messages, “about the instructor,” weekly announcements) and instructional (direct instruction, assignment feedback, FAQs, etc...). The communications between student and instructor may be one-to-one (personal emails) or one-to-many (forum postings, class announcements).</p> <p>The degree and type of student-to-student interaction may vary with the discipline and the level of the course. Not all courses require the same type and frequency of student-to-student interaction. Careful consideration of how the student-to-student interactions support the course objectives will lead to a more efficient and effective design. Examples of student-to-student interactions may include self-introductions, group discussion postings, small-group projects, peer critiques, etc.</p> <p>Refer to the Instructor Worksheet to determine if student-student interaction is appropriate for this course. If the Worksheet indicates that such interaction is appropriate, then consider it in deciding whether the standard is met. If the Worksheet indicates that such interaction is not appropriate, then focus only on student-to-content and instructor-to-student interaction to determine whether the standard has been met. When you think it is appropriate to do so, include a recommendation that student-student interaction be added to the course or receive more emphasis in the course.</p> <p>NOTE: Your evaluation should be based on what you find to be the nature of the course and not on your personal preferences about student-student interaction.</p>

<p>5.3 Clear standards are set for instructor responsiveness and availability (turn-around time for email, grade posting, etc.)</p>	<p>A clear statement of instructor responsibilities is an important component of an online or hybrid course. Students are better able to manage their course activities when the instructor has stated his or her timeframe for responding to student emails and discussion postings and letting students know when they will receive feedback on assignments and when grades will be posted. By sharing these expectations, the instructor also deflects unrealistic student expectations of 24/7 service from the instructor. Frequently these expectations are conveyed in the syllabus or the "meet the instructor" message.</p> <p>If it is necessary to alter the standards during the course, the instructor is encouraged to clearly communicate the adjustments to the students.</p>
<p>5.4 The requirements for student interaction are clearly articulated.</p>	<p>A clear statement of the instructor's expectations with regard to student participation in required course interactions (frequency, length, timeliness, etc.) help students plan and manage their class participation and provide a basis for the instructor to evaluate student participation. The more specifically these expectations are defined, the easier it is for the learner to meet and adhere to the standards.</p> <p>Typically, general statements of student performance expectations are included in the course information page or syllabus. These general requirements may specify the nature of the required participation and expectations for frequency and quality of the student's interactions. More specific task-related performance expectations may be included in the individual task description. The instructor may also share with students a rubric detailing how student interactions are evaluated, including reading and responding to the instructor's and classmates' posts.</p>
<p><b>General Standard 6:</b> Course navigation and the technology employed in the course foster student engagement and ensure access to instructional materials and resources.</p>	
<p>6.1 The tools and media support the learning objectives, and are appropriately chosen to deliver the content of the course.</p>	<p><b>Alignment:</b> The tools and media selected for the course should align with the course and module objectives of the course (see Standards 2.1 and 2.2) by effectively supporting the assessment instruments (Standard 3.1), instructional materials (Standard 4.1), and learning activities (Standard 5.1) in the course.</p> <p>Tools and media used in the course support learning objectives and are integrated with course materials and assignments. Clear information and instructions should be provided regarding how the tools and media support the learning objectives. Technology is not used simply for the sake of using technology. For example, a course might require viewing video materials, but it may not be clear how the video materials illustrate or support any learning objective.</p> <p>Examples of tools include discussion boards, chat rooms, grade book, whiteboard, wiki, blogs, etc.</p> <p>Media are not required for this standard to be met. Rather, <i>if</i> media are used, they should support the learning objectives and be contextually integrated. Examples of media include video, audio, podcasting, gaming, animations, simulations, wikis, blogs, virtual classrooms (for example, Elluminate Live, Second Life), webinars, etc.</p> <p>If a publisher course cartridge is used, the instructor should clearly designate which media are required in the course and which are optional.</p> <p>Special situations: In some cases (check the Instructor Worksheet), the course objectives are institutionally mandated and the individual instructor does not have the authority to change them. For such cases, consider instead the module/unit-level objectives to assess and score Standard 6.1.</p>
<p>6.2 The tools and media support</p>	<p>Tools and media used in the course help students actively engage in the learning process, rather than passively "absorbing" information. Selected tools and media should encourage the student to reflectively grasp and respond to the deeper learning process. Types of learner</p>

<p>student engagement and guide the student to become an active learner.</p>	<p>engagement include learner-content, learner-instructor, and learner-learner. Interactions can provide opportunities to increase learners' comfort levels, but the goal should be to facilitate the broadest and deepest learner engagement possible in the course.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Automated "self-check" exercises requiring student response</li> <li>2. Animations, simulations, and games that require student input</li> <li>3. Learning management system functions that provide competence/timed release functions</li> <li>4. Software that tracks student interaction and progress</li> <li>5. Discussion tools with automatic notification or a "read/unread" tracking feature</li> <li>6. Interactive, real-time software, such as real-time collaborative tools, webinars, and virtual worlds</li> <li>7. Interactive, constructivist software, such as shared documents or wikis.</li> </ol>
<p>6.3 Navigation throughout the online components of the course is logical, consistent, and efficient.</p>	<p>Annotation: Navigation refers to the process of planning, recording, and controlling the movement of a learner from one place to another in the online course.</p> <p>Considerations for effective navigation devices within the online course may include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adherence to accepted web standards-of-function for hypertext links, buttons, and windows</li> <li>2. Provisions for intuitive understanding of function when non-standard navigation devices are employed</li> <li>3. Consistent use of navigation devices</li> </ol> <p>Some navigation devices--next and previous links, for example--are provided by the learning management system used for course delivery and cannot be modified. Other navigation devices--hypertext links, icons, and window functions, for example--may be within the control of the course designer. It can be challenging for the reviewer to determine the locus of control for the various course navigation devices used to move the learner from one place to another in the course.</p>
<p><b>General Standard 7:</b> The course facilitates student access to institutional services essential to student success.</p>	
<p>7.1 The course instructions articulate or link to a clear description of the technical support, academic support, and student support services offered by the university.</p>	<p>To satisfy this standard, a faculty member can simply include the information on "Standard 7 Contacts" document on the M-Drive to either their syllabus or within their course.</p> <p>This document contains contact information for the remote student on how to contact university support for technical, academic, and student services. An instructor can add additional information if needed.</p>
<p><b>General Standard 8:</b> The face-to-face and online course components are accessible to all students.</p>	
<p>8.1 The course incorporates ADA standards and reflects conformance</p>	<p>The instructor should include the university's policy statement concerning ADA, which is listed below. Be sure to include the URL for off-campus students. If the instructor is going to use a Learning Management System other than the one supported by the university, they must provide information on how this software is ADA compliant.</p> <p><b>Americans With Disabilities Act:</b> If you have a documented disability that requires assistance, you will need to register with the</p>

with institutional policy regarding accessibility in online and hybrid courses.

Office of Disability Services for coordination of your academic accommodations. The Office of Disability Services is located in Peltier Hall, Room 100-A. The phone number is (985) 448-4430 (TDD 449-7002), <http://www.nicholls.edu/disability/>