

Applying the Quality Matters™ Rubric

On May 11, 2011, I completed six hours in a workshop on Applying the Quality Matters™ Rubric, led by Linda Jacoby. The QM rubric is intended for use with courses that are delivered fully online or a significant online component (hybrid and blended courses). For the current version of the rubric, see http://www.qmprogram.org/files/QM_Standards_2011-2013-3.pdf.

The QM rubric helps build online courses according to essential online learning standards based on sound learning theory. The QM rubric was developed by faculty across 17 institutions. It also provides a common language for discussion of course design.

The Quality Matters Rubric is a set of 8 general standards and 41 specific standards used to evaluate the design of online and blended courses. The QM rubric is complete with annotations that explain the application of the standards and the relationship among them. A scoring system and set of online tools facilitate the evaluation by a team of reviewers.

The eight general standards include:

1. Course Overview and Introduction
2. Learning Objectives (Competencies)
3. Assessment and Measurement
4. Instructional Materials
5. Learner Interaction and Engagement
6. Course Technology
7. Learner Support
8. Accessibility

Critical course components include Learning Objectives, Assessment and Measurement, Resources and Materials, Learner Engagement, and Course Technology. All these components must work together to ensure that students achieve the desired learning outcomes. When aligned, each of these course components is directly tied to and supports the learning objectives. Specific standards included in Alignment are indicated in the rubric annotations.

I believe that QM processes benefit both individual faculty and their institutions in the following ways:

- Improved student learning outcomes and retention
- Incorporation of new technologies and research findings
- Increased flexibility, creativity, and divergent thinking
- Increased efficiency in using institutional resources

Enhanced Technology-related Skills

During May, 2011, I participated in 9 days of training in technology skills that will enhance my teaching on-campus and on-line. The training included information and

practice about many technology tools useful for instruction, as well as the use of Quality Matters © for course design and management.

May 16 – 20—Tech tools and pedagogy integration

We worked with technology in a hands-on “content first approach.” We watched a showcase demonstration of the potential of the software, and then we interacted and created partial lessons, or learning objects, using the software. The tools we looked at included: Smartboard, Jing, imovie/movie maker, Adobe Connect/net meeting, powerpoint, glogster, wiki sites, and blog sites.

Week Day	Purpose and Tool	Facilitators
Monday	Smartboard in 202 and basic elements	Matt and Marti
Tuesday	Smartboard software for your students	Nathan, Matt, and Marti
Wednesday	Adobe connect/net meeting--Video	Andrea and Matt
Thursday	D2L Quizzes, Groups/Discussions and Wikis/blogs (possible email tips)	Jeff (Shannon)
Friday	More useful tools and Showcase your work	Peers

May 24 – 26— Quality Matters and Course Design and Management

During these sessions, we looked at how we can utilize Quality Matters Standards to affect our online course design. I worked on an online course that I have already designed to build a hybrid or online course. The focus was on alignment of content, materials, assessments and student access to on-line course material. We also examined some ADA online course compliance techniques and tools.

Week Day	Purpose is everything
Monday 24	Introduction to QM and Essential Standards. Create tours/examine student accessibility
Tuesday 25	QM and Essential Standards 4, 5, 6, 8.
Wednesday 26	Applying to our entire course—peer review teams

At least once every hour, I acquired new information or a new skill that made all the time worthwhile! Because of what David Georgina taught us about D2L quizzes, I downloaded Respondus 4.0 and, with the password from Pearson for the test bank to the textbook that I am using, I uploaded the test bank items to my D2L course. This took only about 3 hours and now I have more than 500 question items available on my D2L course for all time! I will be using these questions as discussion starters on campus and on-line, as well as for course quiz items.

David's leadership was exactly on-point for leading faculty members through learning, applying and evaluating the methods that will enrich our teaching. My brain was

so full of possibilities for teaching with technology and teaching on-line. I looked forward to the Fall semester (for which I am much better prepared because of these sessions!).

