

# Questions to Ask When Developing Online Courses

Developing online courses can be a daunting task for new or experienced instructors. E-learning has developed the following short list of questions to help you in the process of designing, evaluating, or refining your course development. Our hope is that these questions will stimulate your creativity and provide a sounding board as you develop

your class. You could call it the Socratic approach to online content development. We've segmented the questions into four basic areas, **Goals, Design, Communication, and Engagement** that when answered should provide the feedback necessary for developing a quality course.

### Goals

- Have you identified the expectations for students taking the course?
- Have you clearly identified outcomes for each learning module?
- Do your required activities, assignments, and tests effectively support all your learning goals and reflect the credit hours awarded for the course?

### Design

- Is your course easily navigated, consistently structured, and fully functional?
- Are design elements graphically pleasing and appropriately used such as icons, pictures, and text?
- Have you included instructions on how to download software or files unique to the course?
- Is your content delivered using common technology in open standards format (unless course requirements mandate otherwise)?
- Are the materials from external sources used within the boundaries of the Copyright Law?
- Is your course ADA Compliant

### Communication

- Did you include your contact information including e-mail, telephone number, office number, office hours, etc?
- Have you established multiple channels of communication with your students like, e-mail, bulletin board, telephone, etc?
- Have you provided helpful links to online orientation, library services, AskAC, and external support services?
- Are you gender inclusive and culturally sensitive in all your communications?

### Engagement

- Do you actively engage students, especially in the following areas?
  - quick, ongoing feedback throughout the course?*
  - clear instructions provided for activities and assignments?*
  - personal connections with students (posted bios, pictures, etc.)*
  - positive messages to students encouraging involvement*
- Do you ensure active student involvement through assigned activities such as?
  - required bulletin board discussions*
  - required group work (which can be conducted via e-mail, etc.)*
  - short essay postings*
  - required responses to other students postings*
  - chat rooms*