

7-2012

# Best Practices for Learner Engagement in Higher Education Online Courses

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BEST PRACTICES FOR LEARNER ENGAGEMENT IN  
HIGHER EDUCATION ONLINE COURSES

by

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B.A., Concordia College, 2008

A Portfolio

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

of

Center for Information Media

St. Cloud State University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Science

St. Cloud, Minnesota

July, 2012

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

An increasing number of universities within the United States are offering online courses, certificates, and even full programs of study online. Between 2000 and 2008, the percentage of undergraduate students enrolled in an online course increased by 12% (Radford, 2011). By offering curriculum via the internet, universities are able to provide access and convenience for nontraditional learners. Many nontraditional students have jobs, families, and other activities that do not allow them the convenience of attending regular synchronous classes, so by offering asynchronous classes universities provide another means for them to acquire a degree. By offering asynchronous classes that are designed with working adults in mind, the university not only opens its doors to a wider range of atypical learners but it allows these learners the opportunity to attend classes whenever and wherever they can arrange the time (Wilson & Stacey, 2004).

Even though universities can better meet the needs of these learners by offering asynchronous courses universities need to ensure these courses maintain the same academic integrity and rigor their traditional face-to-face courses provide. Research shows that a variety of support is needed to assist faculty in making the transition from teaching traditional face-to-face courses to teaching asynchronous

online courses (Blanksen, 2010). Often, as faculty members transition from a face-to-face course to an online version of that curriculum, the traditional course is mimicked. However, to be an effective online course, the curriculum needs to be structured differently from the previous face-to-face version (Wilson & Stacey, 2004) thus requiring appropriate training for faculty so they can make a successful transition from teaching in a traditional setting to teaching online.

### PROBLEM STATEMENT

In an ideal setting, learners would be well prepared to begin an asynchronous online course and faculty members would have the proper training to create engaging online courses. With the rapid growth of online education, there is often a disconnect between the ideal setting for the online learner and faculty member and what is actually happening within the online classroom. A lack of proper learner engagement in an online course creates frustrations for both the faculty member and the learner (Mullen & Tallent-Runnels, 2006). At this time, many online students across the nation begin online courses without any idea how online courses will differ from tradition face-to-face course or what it takes to become a successful online learner (Lao & Gonzales, 2005). Furthermore, many faculty members across the United States are currently being assigned courses without proper training in how to teach curriculum asynchronously online (Barczyk, Buckenmeyer, & Feldman, 2010).

If learners are not properly prepared to take an online course, they may struggle to balance their course loads and effectively master the curricula. If the

faculty members are not informed on how to set up an engaging online course, the learners may not engage with the curriculum (Akyol, Garrison, & Ozden, 2009).

Through the implementation of Online Learner Readiness training, the learner will be able to determine if an online course is appropriate. Also, this readiness training will provide the learner with expectations in terms of time commitment, study habits, and what it takes to be a successful online learner (McPherson & Nunest, 2008). Furthermore, providing professional development for faculty members who have not been trained how to teach online will help assist faculty members in creating an environment in their online classroom that is conducive to learner engagement (Munro & Rice-Munro, 2004). This will be done through faculty workshops specifically geared towards the online teacher.

## THEME AND BACKGROUND

Online courses are a flexible and accessible option for learners looking to obtain a higher education degree. Also, there are more atypical, undergraduate students working towards their bachelor degrees today (Parker, Lenhart, & Moore, 2011). Because of this new trend in part-time and/or atypical student enrollment, higher education institutions must create courses to fit the student need and demand. To do this, many institutions have begun offering more online courses. According to a 2011 Pew Research Study by Parker et al. (2011), 77% of higher education intuitions surveyed are offering online courses to their learners. The undergraduate enrollment rate for online courses is about 15%; however this number is predicted to increase to



50%, with most courses being online within the next ten years (Parker, et al.). At Saint Cloud State University, there are 297 courses being offered online. While there has been a recent increase in online undergraduate courses, this trend has been a mainstream within corporations for some time. The American Society of Training and Development's (ASTD) *State of the Industry Report* for 2011 declares that 40.1% of courses are held online and mobile learning is on the rise and expects to see a training distribution method that is increasingly more internet based. With online training becoming more mainstream in corporations, the experience gained from being an online learner while obtaining a bachelor's degree will assist learners in transferring their online learner knowledge to their future jobs or degree programs. To allow the transfer of knowledge to carry over to future trainings, the undergraduate courses need to have learner interaction within the course curriculum (Vaughan, 2010). The theme for this portfolio is to ensure that both learners and faculty members are prepared for an engaging learner-content experience within the course. In the upcoming paragraphs, interaction, learner engagement, and theories for online courses will be addressed.

### Interactions

There are several interactions that occur during an online asynchronous course; and these interactions can be separated into four general categories. These categories include learner-teacher, teacher-content, learner-learner, and learner-content interactions. Involvement between the learner and the teacher vary in form with each course. For example, such an interaction can be limited to a graded assignment with

minimal feedback or expanded to involve weekly synchronous meetings in addition to assignment feedback. There is interaction between the teacher and the course content during course development. In this process, the teacher must find and/or create the materials for the course before learners have access to it. When learners do have access to the content, the teacher-content interaction does not end. Teachers still make executive decisions about the content that is used to evaluate learners; they determine the content that is visible to learners, and modify the content as needed while learners interact with it. The third interaction is learner-learner; in this interaction learners have discussions and may work collaboratively with one another.

The final interaction is learner content interaction. When describing the interaction between the learner and the course content, Beatty, Branon, and Wilson (2001) state, “the online course content is the expert that guides the learner through the learning experience” (p. 250). To guide learners, they recommend including a motivating and engaging lead-in to the content, segmenting information as applicable (Beatty et al., 2001). Thereby, the projects within this portfolio will focus on learner-content interaction.

### Theory and Engagement

Learning theories can help to explain and determine the interactivity necessary for online courses. Anderson (2008) discusses theory in regard to online learning to explain that a good educational theory does the following three things: “helps to envision new worlds, helps us to make things, and helps to keep us honest” (p. 46). Following these guidelines, there are several major learning methods that could be

utilized in an online course. Anderson cites learner-centered, knowledge-centered, assessment-centered, and community-centered learning. Anderson states that in “knowledge-centered” learning, “learners plunge ever deeper into knowledge resources, providing a new limitless means for them to grow their knowledge...” (p. 49). This is a way to allow those learners who are excelling to continue finding more information and expand their knowledge base. However, particular drawbacks may include information overload, learners missing the main idea, and/or failing to make connections between real world experiences and the knowledge being learned. Knowledge-centered learning “illustrates potential gains in cognitive learning tasks” (p. 57) by teaching curriculum online. As the learner matures and expands their knowledge, it would be beneficial to find a balance between interaction and independence. As technology accessibility and availability increases, more online courses in K-12 and higher education will be created. Those entering college directly from high school will be able to adapt to online courses quickly. However, nontraditional students, those returning to college after working for some time, do not always have the technology skills needed (McPherson & Nunest, 2008). With content containing some form of interactivity (Harmon & Jones, 2001), learners will be more likely to stay engaged. Learners should have a variety of options to choose from when creating material to prove their knowledge. Examples of this include developing podcasts, performing interactive labs, and participating in scenario-based learning.

## PURPOSE

With the growing number of online courses in higher education, it is crucial that learners be engaged with the material (Vaughan, 2010). Through engagement, learners will theoretically retain more information; if learners are not engaged with course material, then they will not retain as much of the course content. While focusing on specific interactions between the learner and the content in my projects, I will show learners how to actively engage with the course content. Additionally, my work will assist faculty members in creating a course environment that is conducive to learner engagement.

#### SIGNIFICANCE OF OVERALL PORTFOLIO

The purpose of engaging learners in online, asynchronous courses is to increase learner retention. Higher education institutions of all shapes and sizes are offering courses online. With the exponential gain in online courses being delivered in higher education institutions across the country, faculty members need to know how to create interactive lessons. In the 2011-2012 academic year, St Cloud Technical and Community College offered 82 different online courses over the entire year, some with multiple sections. Comparatively, St Cloud State University offered 814 sections of total undergraduate and graduate online courses (or roughly 9% of the total number of sections offered).

Recently, St. Cloud State University has made a commitment to improve online teaching and learning. A task force has been created and charged with the goal of developing an overall vision for online learning. Other tasks include determining

standards and procedures for both online course development and faculty professional development. Ideally, the task force will have an outlook and basic plan in place by the spring of 2012 (see Appendix A). Each semester over the past decade, St Cloud State has had approximately 5500 students enrolled in online courses. As online education begins to grow, the projects in this portfolio will be useful to local higher education institutions as well as those across the nation.

This portfolio will highlight best practices for the creation of engaging, meaningful lessons as well as showcase examples that follow the best practices of online learning in professional development training. Specific attention will be directed to the interaction between the learner and the content because to be engaging, the learner must interact with the content directly.

#### DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Asynchronous:** The instructor and learners work independently on the course curriculum. There is no consistently scheduled time for the entire class to meet together.

**Best practice:** A method which has previously shown positive results in content delivery and learner interaction.

**Curriculum:** All of the content, including information presented and assignments, completed for a single course.

**Engagement:** The learner is intrigued by the content presented and enjoys interacting with the course materials.

**Learner-content interaction:** The learner works directly with the content, not the faculty member, to learn and retain the material.

**Online learning:** Learning that takes place primarily over the internet.

**Navigation:** The way learners move through the course content and features.

**Non-traditional student:** Students who are outside of the following criteria: 18-22 year old, living on/near campus, and going to school full-time.

**Synchronous:** The online course has a specified time where the class meets as a large group to discuss the course curriculum. This meeting is often held over the internet.

## CONCLUSION

This portfolio on learner engagement during online courses is beneficial to both the learner and the faculty teaching the course. By learning how to properly navigate and engage with the course content through the Online Learner Readiness tutorial, the learner will be better able to work with the course material provided by faculty members. By attending the workshops on online course set-up, faculty members will become aware of what to do and what not to do in the online classroom. Additionally, they may be able to develop more engaging course content. Chapter 2 will consist of a literature review based on learner engagement in online courses; Chapter 3 will introduce the best practices for learner engagement and describe the projects that were designed for this portfolio; Chapter 4 will showcase the tangible products, while Chapter 5 will give reflection to the projects.

## Chapter 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### INTRODUCTION

In the last decade, higher education institutions have seen an increase in the number of online course participants. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2011), between 2000 and 2008 the percentage of students enrolled in at least one online course has increased by 12%. Additionally, the number of courses being offered online is expected to increase exponentially within the next three years (Parker et al., 2011). With an increase in online learning an emphasis has been placed on studying how to improve learner interaction with curricula and how to better prepare the faculty member for teaching online. This review of literature will occur with two discussions. First, the discussion will focus on learners entering the online classroom for the first time. The second part of the discussion will center on how faculty members may play a role in the way learners engage with the course curriculum.

When collecting information, primary research articles were collected through EBSCO host. Research terms used to locate material included: higher education, undergraduate, online, e-learning, engage, motivate, virtual learning, asynchronous,

synchronous. Secondary articles were located with the same search terms through Academic Search Premier, Google Scholar, and Information Media coursework. Key terms that were not included were face-2-face, synchronous learning, and discussion based courses. These terms were not included in the search because they often returned results that were not relevant to learner-content interaction for online courses. The research included in this portfolio is current and less than 10 years old. The projects within this portfolio were built to assist students in becoming active and engaging online learners and to assist faculty members in creating a course that is conducive to active learning; these strategies are identified by the articles referenced within chapter two.

Work by McPherson & Nunest, 2008; Mullen & Tallent-Runnels, 2006 shows, that prior knowledge of the delivery method not only helps benefit the learners at the beginning of the course but also increases their chance of successfully completing any online course they register for. Also, the learners need formal support when learning how to navigate their new online classroom (McPherson, & Nunest, 2008; Mandernach, Donnelly, Dailey, & Schulte, 2005; Tham & Werner, 2002). In addition, students who do receive formal support on successfully completing online courses and utilizing the course management system have an easier time learning the content and transferring the content into their long term memory than those learners who do not receive formal navigational support (Tham & Werner, 2002).

Additionally, providing orientation and navigational support to faculty members as they build their online course is necessary to create an engaging



curriculum (Benson & Brack, 2009; Tham & Werner, 2002; Wilson & Stacey, 2004). Transition from the traditional classroom to the online world comes with perceptions about how the online course may function (Mullen & Tallent-Runnels, 2006). These perceptions have been studied qualitatively from the perspective of the learner and faculty member.

### TRANSITION TO THE ONLINE WORLD

It was not long ago that courses were taught primarily in a face-to-face classroom. With the World Wide Web becoming prevalent in learners daily lives, universities have begun to offer courses via the internet. This change brings about different perceptions from both learners and faculty members. Examples include the amount of work time required and the type and amount of support that will be provided. Additionally, both need to be orientated to the new environment and even given professional development to make those courses successful.

#### Online Perceptions

There are differences in learner perception of online and traditional courses in several categories, including instructor support and workload (Mullen & Tallent-Runnels, 2006). Online instructor workload was perceived to have been much less than in the traditional classroom by those that had never taught an online course before however, in actuality the workload was found to be more. These perceptions were linked to learner outcomes such as motivation, satisfaction, and retention in a survey conducted by Mullen & Tallent-Runnels. Learners often perceived that an online

course would take less motivation than a traditional face-to-face course where it was found that more self-motivation would be necessary to complete the online course. The conclusion of the Mullen & Tallent-Runnels report showed that it was important to provide online learners with additional support when compared to the support provided to learners in the traditional classroom. Since online learners will not be directly on campus to receive the same services face-to-face students receive, it is imperative that virtual services are addressed and provided. For example, services provided by the library, advising center, student services and technology support have to be handled via the internet. At Saint Cloud State University, online learners are able to access most software available in the on-campus computer labs by accessing the virtual lab. Additionally, the library offers web-based library assistance, online searches, and book checkout services. By providing these online access and support services, learners can be more successful in their academic studies.

Mullen and Tallent-Runnels (2006) conducted a study on student perceptions in an online course compared to a face-to-face alternative. The authors found, that when comparing learning environments, a strong difference in learners' perceptions of instructor support and expectations exists depending on whether learners learn in a traditional or online classroom. Learners in the traditional classroom felt the instructor was more supporting while online learners felt the instructor had higher expectations and offered less support. One type of support from the instructor is affective support. An example of affective support in the classroom includes responding to learner concerns in a timely manner and with positivity. Learner opinions of the affective

support, such as teacher presence, provided by instructors in the online versus traditional setting accounted for the largest difference between the two types of learners. Affective support is the way an instructor shows they care about their learners, whether through providing personal examples, humor, listening, or by asking learners to share. Traditional learners rated instructors much higher in affective support compared to online learners and instructors. This research conducted by Mullen and Tallent-Runnels (2006) provided insight into how learners perceive course content and faculty interaction. The research could have been more detailed by attempting to give suggestions about how faculty could give more support to their online students. Examples include faculty members providing additional support to their online learners by offering online office hours, providing timely feedback on assignments, responding to student emails quickly, and communicating about course progress often.

In contrast, learner motivation, self-regulation, and dedication molded by instructor expectations remain similar between online and traditional learners. Many online instructors explain that learners in an online environment will require more self-regulation and motivation (Mullen & Tallent-Runnels, 2006). However, in the absence of clear expectations from the instructor, learners appear to adopt the same level of expectations regardless of the environment. Setting course expectations at the beginning of the semester for the learner through a course introduction, objectives, assignment rubrics and course structure, the learner may remain more dedicated to the course (Mullen & Tallent-Runnels).

Instructors can remember to build a supportive learning environment and be aware of learners' perceptions. Detailed information given at the beginning of the course and surveys at the mid-term and at the conclusion of a course can help gauge how learners feel and most importantly show learners that they have instructor support. Additionally, through building a community of inquiry in the online classroom, students will begin to work with other students. This growing emphasis on building learning communities will force students to engage with the course content which in turn will increase the students' satisfaction and learning (Akyol et al., 2009).

#### Orientation and Navigation

Orientation of an online course is important for both the learner and the faculty member. As a learner, it is necessary to understand the goals for oneself, learn to prioritize the responsibilities, and be able to locate and develop support systems (Connick, 1999). Through an online learner orientation, the learner will be required to assess their needs to determine if online learning is right for them. Questions the learner should address include "why do I want to be an online student? Why do I think online learning is right for me?" (Connick, 1999, p. 91).

Next, they will be able to view tutorials on how to navigate through SCSU's learning management system and other software such as Adobe Connect and the virtual lab the University uses campus wide. At the same time, to address the prioritizing of responsibilities, it will be crucial to share time management and study skills with the learner. Downloadable worksheets or interactive on-screen worksheets will help the learner to immediately create a time management schedule that will assist

the learner in setting their priorities (Connick, 1999). Campus and online resources should also be given to the learner during orientation so the learner is able to begin building the necessary support systems. Learners will have a variety of support systems available to them. These include classmates, school resources, friends/family, and their faculty members. Support systems needed by an online learner can be different from one learner to the next. In an online learner orientation, it will be important to explain the different options for online support. Examples include, “connecting and communicating with classmates and faculty members”, “creating their own community of learners”, “online study groups” (Connick, 1999, p. 101), and learning resources provided by the University. By implementing an online learner orientation, the University will be able to provide students with the opportunity to assess if online learning is right for them and ensure that all online learners begin their courses with the same foundation of information.

### Faculty Development

In addition, sharing with faculty members ways to implement online learning activities into their courses are of equal importance. Many educators are new to teaching online courses, so to properly design, develop, and implement online courses, faculty members need to have professional development training (Benson & Brack, 2009). Seminars, trainings, and workshops for faculty members can help to increase awareness of best practices for the online classroom. However, according to the review done by Tham and Werner (2002), one session seminars are not likely to fully explain an online learning framework to faculty as completely as an entire series of

workshops. Through complete professional development, seminars and hands-on workshops, the faculty will be better able to create a positive online-learning experience (Chickering & Gamson, 1991).

Wilson and Stacey (2004) compared the faculty members who were considered early adopters to the mainstream majority members and found that the early adopters (those willing to implement technology immediately) envisioned technology as fun and were more confident in their ability to integrate the new technology into the curriculum. Because of the different skill levels found in early adopters compared to the mainstream members, Wilson and Stacey (2004) compiled a list of major roles a “competent online teacher” (p. 35) should possess (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1

Major Roles of the Competent Online Teacher by Wilson and Stacey (2004)

Role	Concern
Content Facilitator	concerned directly with facilitating the learners' growing understanding of course content
Technologist	concerned with making or helping make technological choices that improve the environment available to learners
Designer	concerned with designing worthwhile online learning tasks
Manager/Administrator	concerned with issues of learner registration, security, record keeping, etc.
Process Facilitator	concerned with facilitating the range of online activities that are supportive of student learning
Adviser/Counselor	concerned with offering advice or counseling to learners on an individual or private basis to help them get the most out of their engagement with the course

Assessor	concerned with providing grades, feedback, and validation of learners' work
Researcher	concerned with engagement in production of new knowledge of relevance to the content areas being taught

Meanwhile, as the demand for online courses increased, Park University found it necessary to create guidelines for faculty members to follow in their online courses to maintain “instructional quality and promote best practices” (Mandernach et al., 2005). The goal of the “Online Instructor Evaluation System” is to educate instructors on online learning standards, hold them accountable for best practices, and allow them to acquire professional development (Mandernach et al., 2005). Topics evaluated included: set-up, community building, discussion facilitation, grading, classroom assessments, instructional materials, and overall course organization (Mandernach et al., 2005). By using this evaluation method the instructors were able to make improvements over the course of the semester.

The School of Education within Saint Cloud State University has also developed minimum standards for building online, asynchronous courses (see Appendix B). The standards cover six areas: course overview, objectives, course design, assessment/evaluation, accessibility, and any other additional requirements for the course. By having standards, all courses within the school will have a basic format which will allow learners to become familiar with the courses in a timelier manner.

Although faculty members have been teaching face-to-face courses for years, they may be reluctant to convert their classroom into an online classroom. To

encourage faculty members to begin teaching online, Barczyk et al. (2010) conducted research so they could create the Distance Education-Mentoring Program. In this program, a mentor engages in a partnership with a mentee to encourage growth. The program was designed in response to the paradigm shift because of the way technology has changed teaching and learning (Barczyk et al., 2010). The article does well in defining why mentoring is important; the benefits were three-fold and include (a) the mentor-mentee relationship where ideas can be developed, (b) the mentor fulfilling their own developmental needs, and (c) the mentee receives career support and online teaching professional development (Barczyk et al., 2010). It would have been additionally beneficial had they described the implementation plan of the mentoring program.

Through professional development lessons and handouts, the faculty members should have access to best practices. Chickering and Gamson (1991) and Chickering and Ehrmann (1996) created a list of several principles to outline the best practices in building a course for the online world. Examples include student-faculty communication, active learning, prompt feedback, high expectations, and respecting the many learning styles (see Table 2.2).



Table 2.2

Principles of Best Practices for the Online World by Chickering and Ehrmann (1996)

Principle	Example
Encourages Contacts Between Students and Faculty	Faculty member builds a relationship with the student; regularly provides detailed feedback promptly to the student
Develops Reciprocity and Cooperation Among Students	Case studies and discussion assignments that make learners work in small groups
Uses Active Learning Techniques	Learners engage with real-world assignments and actively reflect on that assignment
Gives Prompt Feedback	The learner receives feedback from other learners and the faculty member on submitted work
Emphasizes Time on Task	Faculty members must anticipate the time an assignment will take and attempt to not give additional, meaningless tasks.
Communicates High Expectations	Faculty members should communicate clearly where the final project will go, possibly to a real-world client or published in a journal.
Respects Diverse Talents and Ways of Learning	Faculty members are open to allowing students to be creative and use their many talents.

Aside from faculty receiving the professional development they need to create an engaging asynchronous course, learners need to receive orientation as well.

Learners can become overwhelmed with coursework and self discipline can waiver when the course navigation and learner orientation is inadequate (Tham & Werner,

2002). Incorporating multimedia into the mix would help to stimulate and engage online learners with the content as opposed to giving learners static documents. McPherson and Nunest (2008) set out to determine what critical success factors were necessary to support online courses in higher education institutions. Their findings showed that new online learners could use preparation techniques prior to beginning their first online course (McPherson & Nunest, 2008).

One strategy that would be helpful to assist new online learners is to properly structure and organize the theoretical content for a better understanding of the curriculum (Diaz & Blazquez, 2009). In the study conducted by Diaz and Blazquez, 71% of the learners surveyed claimed that because the course content was structured and organized, the curriculum was easy to review and study from. There are several recommended instructional strategies that can be implemented to properly structure the course; examples include clearly stated objectives, the use of concept maps, and written reflection.

There are several frameworks for navigational layout in an asynchronous course. The Quality Matters Program is a collegial review process that is designed to reflect national standards of best practices and research literature (*Quality Matters Program*, 2010). The program produces a rubric for faculty members to follow when developing their online courses; the rubric can be found in Appendix C. To become a nationally accredited course, the class must receive a “total overall score of 72 out of 85 points and have answered ‘yes’ to all 3-point Essential Standards” (*Quality Matters Program*, 2010). The reviewers do not look at the course delivery or specific

academic content but looks at “the creation, assembly, and layout of instructions and course components” (*Quality Matters Program*, 2010). Course content that follows a stable, repetitive outline is necessary for learner engagement with the curriculum. Learners should not have to spend time searching for the material but should find themselves immersed in the learning (Tham & Werner, 2002).

Prior to the creation of the rubric, the Quality Matters program underwent a large literature review process to ensure the rubric is evidence based. For each standard incorporated within the rubric there are a variety of references to back up their statements. A summary of this literature review for each standard can be found in Appendix D.

The Quality Matters program has been implemented at St Cloud State University and all other Minnesota State Colleges and Universities since 2008. By incorporating the program into online courses, there are benefits for the institution, faculty members, and learners (Coastal Carolina University, 2012). The institution is able to show they are committed to quality online education while faculty members are assisted in designing and developing their course structure. Learners benefit from courses following the program as well. Essentially, if all courses followed the Quality Matters rubric learners would have a standardized layout for any online course taken.

### ENGAGEMENT THROUGH PARTICIPATION

After successful professional development and course set up by the faculty member and completion of online learning education orientation by the learner, the

course content is ready to be utilized. By providing learning activities that are well thought out and designed the learner will engage with the course material and retain the necessary information (Zen, 2008). Examples of online learning activities include resource scavenger hunts, collaborative webquests, online jigsaw learning, and interactive polls (Watkins, 2005). A course activity engages the learner by requiring the learner to actively participate. The examples listed above ensure that the learner must interact with the course content to show his/her understanding.

#### Learner-content Interaction

One theory that involves learners to actively utilize the course content is constructivism. Constructivism is built around the idea that “knowledge is not transmitted: it is constructed” (Smith & Ragan, 2005, p. 19) and that learning is an active process developed through experience (Smith & Ragan, 2005). Through this approach, there is a larger scope of collaboration and communication where the learner takes center stage (Benson & Brack, 2009). By implementing Web 2.0 technology into the online course, learners are able to retrieve, share, and evaluate information while creating new knowledge (Benson & Brack, 2009).

A recent study by Harmon and Jones (2001) discussed how the effectiveness of a specific online learning environment is useful for instructors attempting to create well designed courses geared toward learning. They found that a course including asynchronous discussions, pre-recorded mini-lessons, and weekly synchronous discussions produced both positive and negative results. Synchronous discussions were limited to ninety minutes per week, which supposedly encouraged learners to

participate in the asynchronous activities. This environment supported a constructivist approach where learners used the asynchronous discussions and mini-lessons to create their own knowledge of the material. Significantly, Harmon and Jones (2001) found that all of the students believed they were behind in their coursework because upon logging in to the learning management system they were told how many new discussion messages had been posted. Suggestions for allowing the learner to interact asynchronously include case studies, research projects, a limited number of discussion posts, and reinforcement activities (such as concept maps and ungraded quizzes). The National Center on Universal Design for Learning (2011) has guidelines for providing multiple means of engagement. The checkpoints and the relevant examples match many suggested by Harmon and Jones. However, it is important to note that the National Center on Universal Design for Learning provides a more in-depth analysis explaining the importance and implementation strategy for each checkpoint.

To guide students through the course material, Beatty, Branon, and Wilson (2001) and the National Center on Universal Design for Learning recommend having a motivating and engaging attention getter prior to the start of each topic. Secondly, courses should be broken into specific segments that begin with a high amount of 'scaffolding' and gradually reduce the amount of scaffolding provided as the course progresses (Beatty et al., 2001). Scaffolding is where each topic or idea builds on another. This would require the faculty member to organize course material in a linear manner with the knowledge and recall material being taught immediately and the conceptual and synthesis information being taught after the learner has mastered the

beginning content. Further, the course topics should have a distinct layout with five different sections or categories for each unit. The categories suggested by Beatty, et al. included “Why Learn It”, “How It’s Done”, “You Do It”, “Explain It”, and “Now Think Again” (p. 251).

It is important to establish relevance of the course content with the learner (Beatty et al., 2001 & National Center for UDL, 2011). By informing the learner of the purpose and importance of the course content, the learner will be better focused. Secondly, it is necessary to allow the learner to be taught the information before expecting them to know the content. This would be the second stage of Beatty et al.’s (2001) “How it’s done”. Next, the learner needs to have the opportunity to repeat what has been taught, through hands on activities and active learning. Lastly, the learner will practice explaining what it was they learned and reflect on their progress. Through these five steps the learner is better able to retain the information that was presented.

### Learner Retention

After the learner engages with the course material, it is necessary to show that the learner encoded and retained information in their long term memory. Munro and Rice-Munro (2004) focused on four different theories: behavioral, cognitive, constructivist, and humanist to show the learner had retained information. The first theory, behavioral, looks to “monitor the learner’s behaviors” (p. 28). The second theory, cognitive training, required the material to connect with “learner-generated memory devices to help learners retain and use the information in the future”.

Constructivism is based on the idea that the learner actively engages with the content and creates projects reflecting their knowledge. After defining constructivism, Munro and Rice-Munro furthered the discussion by looking at ways to implement the theories into the online classroom. No one specific theory is enough to reach all learners and most instructors are aware that there is a need “to offer a variety of approaches” (p. 29). So, to best reach learners one suggestion offered was to “provide optional instructional approaches for each topic and let the learner use one or more of them to increase knowledge and skills” (p. 30). The conclusion by Munro and Rice-Munro was that this is a great idea to reach all learners effectively; however, the cost effectiveness of creating several approaches to the same lesson is not ideal.

One example may be to include practice problems that touch on the different learning theories while still allowing the lesson to have multiple approaches. It is possible to attempt to address a new learning approach each time the lesson is taught. For example, while teaching the course the first semester, it could be taught addressing auditory learners. These lessons and assignments would be saved and could be re-taught the next year, while the faculty member addressed another learning approach (visual) the second year. By the end of year two, perhaps the learners would be able to select an auditory lesson or a visual lesson. Additionally, lessons could be created to include multimedia principles which could increase learner interaction as well. Examples of this include the redundancy, split attention, and personalization principles (Mayer, 2005). The idea would be to offer students a variety of options to prove they

had the learned the course curricula. Ideas include outlining the material, creating concept maps, acting the material out as a play, writing a song, etc.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the needs of learners at higher education institutions, online learning appears to be here to stay. To effectively engage the undergraduate learners, proper course infrastructure when designing the course will go a long way (Zen, 2008). Learning activities and course orientation also add to the learner-content interaction and experiences. From the previous research studies completed on asynchronous courses, it appears evident that proper course structure and orientation for learners will increase learner retention and content interaction (McPherson & Nunest, 2008). In the remainder of this portfolio, I will build projects that focus on faculty professional development in building asynchronous courses, new online learner orientation, and tools for increasing learner retention and creating learner-content interaction.



## Chapter 3

### BEST PRACTICES AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

#### OBJECTIVES

The problem addressed in this portfolio is to increase learner engagement with the content in an online course. Through my projects, I will highlight ways for the faculty members and the learners to better prepare themselves for learner engagement in online courses. Upon completion of my portfolio, I will have demonstrated my competencies in:

- Designing and developing an online learner orientation that addresses Desire2Learn navigation, how to be a successful online student, and myths and perceptions of the online learner.
- Designing and developing a course shell that will assist new faculty members in properly organizing their online course environment.

#### PROJECTS

##### **Online learner orientation: Part I.**

**Product.** A design document that describes the audience, tasks, and design strategies for a student-focused online learning orientation will be the end product.

After completing this document, the information will be used to develop the orientation program.

**Content.** The online learner orientation design document will outline the audience for which the material will be designed. It will also address the learning tasks that will occur during the orientation. Through the structure of Gagne's nine events of instruction interactions will be created to assist the learner in the learning process. Additionally, a storyboard will be developed to outline what will need to be authored.

**Process.** I will begin writing the design document for the online learner orientation by conducting an audience analysis by speaking with the Director of Online Learning within the Center of Continuing Studies. From there, I will create a task analysis and determine the style in which to deliver the material. Finally, a storyboard will be designed and developed that shows a clear path of how the orientation will flow.

**Relationship.** Both St. Cloud State University and St. Cloud Technical and Community College are offering more courses online than they have previously because of the demand from students. At this time, neither school is providing an overview of their learning management system (Desire2Learn) or what it takes to be a successful online student. In addition, both schools have recognized a need for online orientation by creating different committees and task forces. As an online learner myself, the first few weeks of using Desire2Learn were not as intuitive as I had hoped. Also, I found myself noticing differences between the online world and the face-to-

face classroom. Through this online learner orientation, I hope to assist other new online learners before they begin their course(s).

**Online learner orientation: Part II.**

***Product.*** By using Adobe Captivate, I will create an online learner orientation. Through using Captivate, the contents can be published to many different formats for sharing with the MNSCU community. At this time, the Center for Continuing Studies at St. Cloud State University and the Online Student Success Task Force at St. Cloud Technical and Community College have expressed interest in using the final product. The product could also be modified for other departments on campus as well as schools across the nation.

***Content.*** The online learner orientation will have a main menu that will allow the user to navigate the training at their own pace and in their own chosen order. There will be three separate sections to the training. Desire2Learn navigation, tips for being a successful online student, and myths of the online world. Content and navigation of the training will be kept simple to accommodate those with minimal to average computer skills.

***Process.*** I will follow the design document previously created to develop the orientation program. A storyboard and task analysis will be created prior to authoring. During the authoring stages and upon completion of authoring, I will conduct an evaluation to look for inaccuracies, technical problems, and more. After the evaluation, I will make the necessary changes and consider the project ready for their needs and my portfolio needs.

***Relationship.*** Both St. Cloud State University and St. Cloud Technical and Community College are offering more courses online than they have previously because of the demand from students. At this time, neither school is providing an overview of their learning management system (Desire2Learn) or what it takes to be a successful online student. In addition, both schools have recognized a need for online orientation by creating different committees and task forces. As an online learner myself, the first few weeks of using Desire2Learn were not as intuitive as I had hoped. Also, I found myself noticing differences between the online world and the face-to-face classroom. Through this online learner orientation, I hope to assist other new online learners before they begin their course(s).

**Professional development: D2L course shell.**

***Product.*** This project will be a Desire2Learn course with specific placeholders to assist faculty in following the Quality Matters rubric. Examples and brief descriptions of how to incorporate each component will be provided within the shell.

***Content.*** The content itself will be largely based on Quality Matters. The course shell will have example items that describe the purpose and showcase a good example of that component. Emphasis will be placed on clear navigation and structure for their learners.

***Process.*** Previously, I have developed tutorials for Desire2Learn to assist faculty members in navigating and using D2L to its full potential. These tutorials provided me a basis for building the course shell. Next, I will discuss with SCSU D2L experts (IMS and Web Team staff) to learn where faculty members have

questions/concerns. After discussing with the D2L experts, I will build the course shell. I will also obtain feedback while building from St Cloud State University's D2L site administrator.

***Relationship.*** This project relates to my career objectives because I would like to become an online learning director or involved in professional development for online faculty members. The use of a learning management system at the undergraduate level has been around for ten years or more. In the beginning, instructors supplemented their face-to-face courses with the LMS. Now, as we have more advanced LMS', courses have the ability to be held online only within that learning management system. Unfortunately, as the LMS becomes more advanced, faculty members are not given specific job aids or training to allow them to become familiar with the changes. This course shell will provide faculty members with the opportunity to align their courses to the Quality Matters rubric without them having to spend a large amount of time researching Quality Matters.

## TIMELINE

December 2011

- Culminating project committee members agree to participate.

April 2012

- Culminating project preliminary meeting with committee members

April 2012-June 2012

- Project production and completion.

- Remain in contact with committee members about project completion.

July 2012

- Culminating project completed.
- Final meeting with committee members
- Oral and written exit interview with the Information Media department.

August 2012

- Graduation.

## Chapter 4

### TANGIBLE PRODUCTS

#### INTRODUCTION

There are three projects that make up the contents of chapter four. As described within chapter three, they were designed to better assist faculty members and learners in an online course environment. The first project is a design document to outline the needs and strategies of developing an orientation for new online learners. Within this document is also a storyboard that was used to design the second project. Part two of the project was the authoring and evaluating of the online learner orientation. The final project for this portfolio was the design and development of a Desire2Learn course shell. The final versions of these three projects are presented within this chapter.

ONLINE LEARNER ORIENTATION: PART 1

Design Document:

Online Learner Orientation

by

Kristen M. Carlson

B.A., Concordia College, 2008

A Portfolio

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

of

Information Media

St. Cloud State University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of Science

St. Cloud, Minnesota

July, 2012



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## Executive Summary

An online learner orientation is necessary for new online learners at St. Cloud State University. Currently, there are 297 online courses offered to St. Cloud State learners. The purpose of the training will be to introduce Desire2Learn, study skills, and online learning myths to first time, undergraduate learners at the university. Specifically, the learners will be provided with an overview of Desire2Learn and the Desire2Learn mobile interface. They will also be provided time and stress management techniques. Third, they will be presented with five common online learning myths. These myths will be debunked with specific facts pertaining to St. Cloud State University when applicable.

The orientation will be hosted on the web and will be designed to allow learners to complete it at their own pace and on their own schedule. It is assumed that learners will have basic computer skills and will have graduated from high school. Learners will be asked to interact with the orientation by watching videos, answering questions, and playing a Fact or Fiction game. Throughout the orientation, learners will be evaluated through the questions. They will be provided feedback on their answers immediately and will receive a final score at the end of the tutorial. Additionally, learners will be provided with information about where to go for help with issues pertaining to their online learning at St. Cloud State University.

## Introduction

Between 2000 and 2008, there has been a 12% increase in undergraduate students enrolled in a distance education course, excluding correspondence courses (Radford, 2011). This increase is in part due to non-traditional learners finding the online option an accessible way to return to higher education. In the 2007-2008 school year, 55.8% of the students enrolled in a distance education course were 24 years of age or older (Radford, 2011) which is outside of the traditional undergraduate learner age range. Because of this increase in student enrollment for online courses, there is a need for an online orientation. The need arises from the many of today's learners are enrolling in online courses without any idea how the course may differ from the traditionally attended face-to-face course (Lao & Gonzales, 2005). If learners are not properly prepared to take an online course, they may struggle to balance their course loads and effectively master the curricula. The goal of the online learning orientation would be to prepare new online learners for success in the virtual classroom by providing students with an asynchronous, interactive tutorial. The tutorial would cover learning management navigation, strategies for success, and examine common misconceptions of online courses.

## Audience Analysis

The learners for the online learning orientation would be enrolled at Saint Cloud State University and be signed up for an online course. The tutorial will be designed for undergraduate students with a large array of backgrounds. Differences

include a variety of cultures, possible linguistic barriers, education levels, and age span.

To understand the specific audience at Saint Cloud State University, a student survey conducted during the 2011-2012 school year was analyzed. The survey included three hundred seven undergraduate, online student participants. The data reported 57% of the learners were between the ages of 18-25 and 27% were between 26-40 years of age (Center for Continuing Studies, 2012). Additionally, 46% of these learners were enrolled in the course for convenience while 31% were enrolled because of their inability to enroll in on-campus courses (Center for Continuing Studies, 2012). These online learners also have priorities outside of obtaining a bachelor's degree. The Continuing Studies survey (2012) reported that at St. Cloud State University, 74% of learners enrolled in online courses currently have part-time or full-time jobs.

Many of the online learners entering St. Cloud State University will have prior knowledge about formal instruction and computers. All learners will have completed high school and received a diploma, which will give them prior knowledge of how a course is typically structured in a traditional setting. Some learners may need additional help successfully completing the tutorial and beginning the actual course they have registered for. Also, some of the learners may have earned an associate's degree previously or may be currently enrolled in face-to-face courses at the university. In this case, these learners will have a solid understanding of higher education in terms of schedules, services, and course requirements. These learners

will be able to work with course materials immediately without as much difficulty when compared to learners with no experience in higher education.

Additionally, many of the learners will arrive with computer skills. The range of those skills however, will be wide. Traditional, undergraduate learners are often referred to as digital natives. These learners grew up using computers, the internet, and have taken to mobile devices (Oblinger, 2008). Non-traditional learners will most likely not be as familiar with education software systems. These learners have used the computer for specific purposes on an as-needed basis and therefore will not have as much experience (Oblinger, 2008). This is not to say that all traditional learners will have expert computer skills and all non-traditional learners will have basic skills but to keep in mind that the audience will be a wide-spectrum of users who will all need to navigate the orientation.

In summary, the audience for the online learning orientation will include a variety of undergraduate learners enrolled at a higher education institution. These learners will have a multitude of prior knowledge of varying degrees. After completion of the orientation, learners should be on the same page or know where to get additional help to get themselves there by the start of their courses.

### Learning Context

The online learning orientation will be segmented appropriately into three sections. Learners will spend approximately one hour completing the tutorial. The tutorial will be hosted online and available asynchronously. This will allow learners

to find a time that fits their schedule. By segmenting the lesson material, learners are provided with smaller amounts of information at any given time. This allows the working memory to process each segment of information. Additionally, by allowing the learners to work at their own pace, the users can refresh their working memory when they are individually ready (Moreno & Mayer, 2003). By doing so, the tendency for information overload is reduced.

### Learning Task

Upon completion of the online learning orientation, learners will be prepared to begin online courses at St. Cloud State University. Specifically, four learning objectives will be addressed. In the first two objectives learners will understand how to navigate Desire2Learn (D2L), St. Cloud State's learning management system, and recognize terminology associated with it. Third, learners will identify proper stress and time management techniques for online learning. Fourth, learners will have an understanding of common myths surrounding online learning.

Prior to beginning the online learning orientation, learners must be able to work independently and have an interest in taking an online course at St. Cloud State University. It would also be best if learners came with an open mind and motivated to learn new skills.

### Learning Goal

Upon completion of the tutorial, learners will understand how to navigate their online course and have skills to succeed at being an online learner.

## Objectives

The tutorial will give learners the tools needed to meet four objectives.

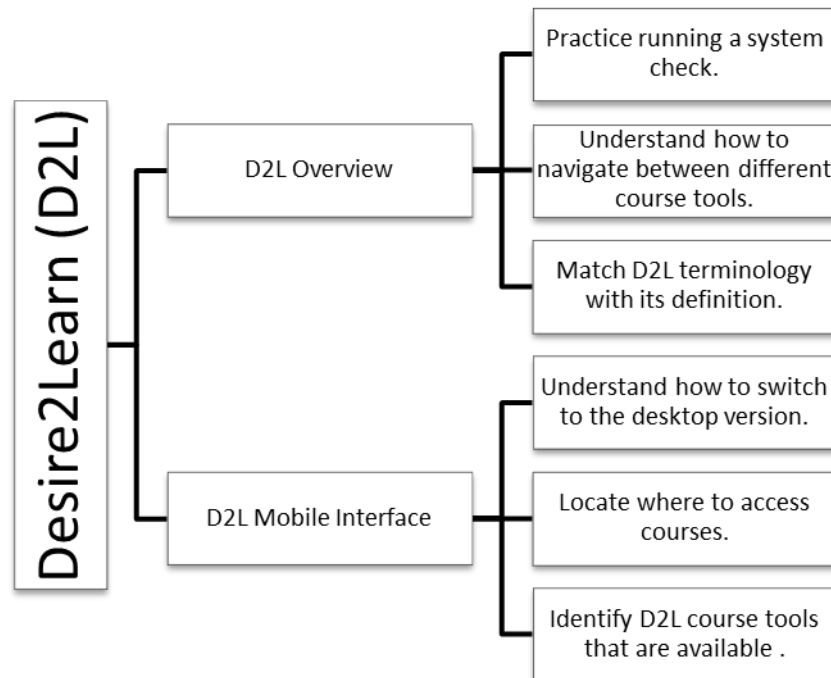
1. Given an overview of Desire2Learn, learners will navigate to the “course selection” location within the mobile interface and navigate to the system check on the login screen within 2 attempts.
2. Given an overview of Desire2Learn, learners will match course tools, specific to D2L, with the type of information found within that tool with no more than one error.
3. Given a list of study skills, learners will be able to identify time management techniques and proper stress management techniques with no more than one error for each list provided.
4. Given a list of common online learning myths, learners will be able to determine which statements are true and which statements are false with no more than one error.

Task 1:

1. Desire2Learn
  - a. D2L Overview for students
    - i. Understand how to run a System Check.
    - ii. Successfully show how to navigate within a course.
    - iii. Match D2L terminology regarding course tools to the correct definitions.
    - iv.

b. D2L Mobile Interface

- i. Illustrate how to switch to the desktop version from the mobile screen.
- ii. Locate where to access individual courses.
- iii. Identify the D2L features that can be accessed on the mobile version of the site.



Task 2:

1. Skills to succeed

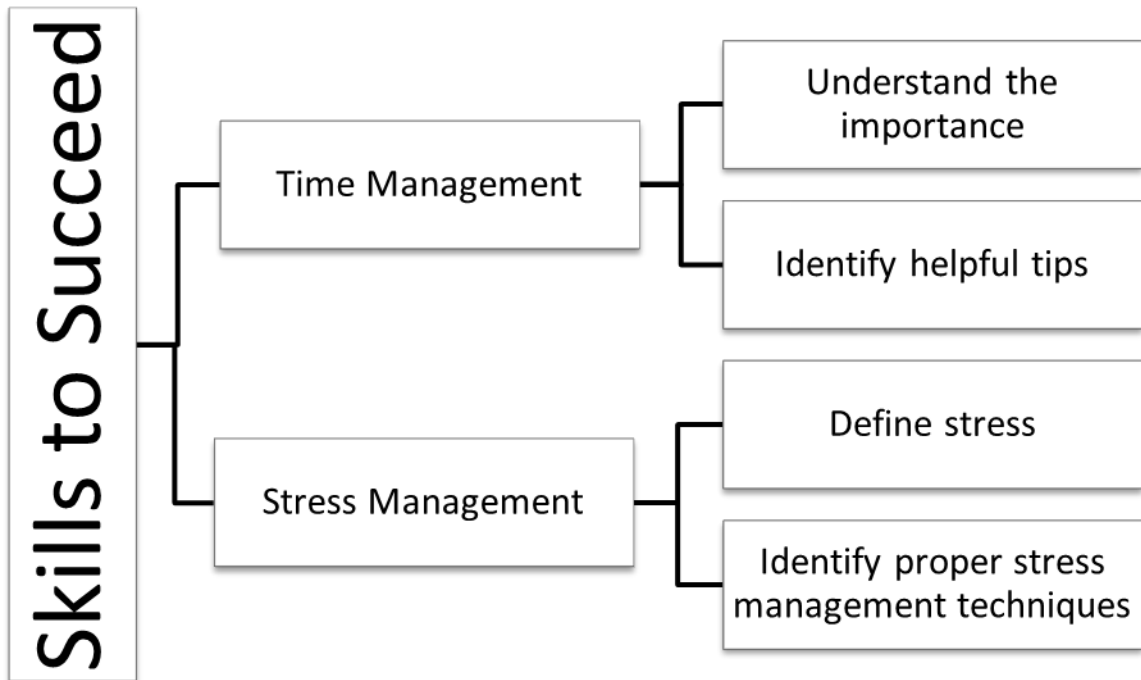
a. Time Management

- i. Understand why time management is important when taking online courses.
- ii. Identify three tips that are helpful when managing time.



b. Stress Management

- i. Define stress.
- ii. Identify proper stress management techniques.

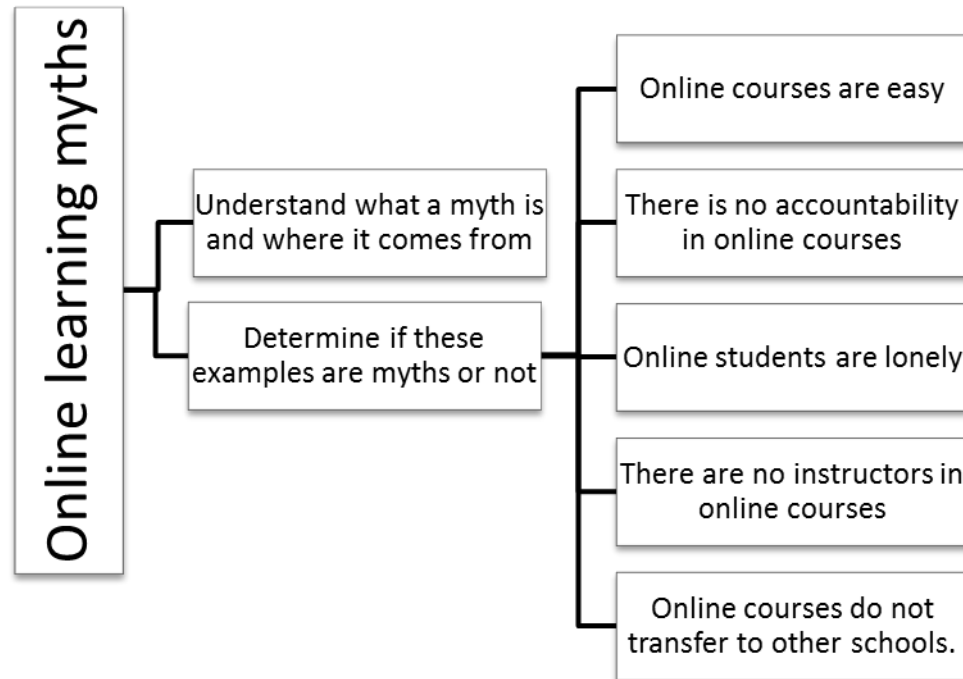


Task 3:

1. Online learning myths

- a. Understand what a myth is and where myths come from.
- b. Determine if the following statements are true or false.
  - i. Online courses are easier than traditional.
  - ii. There is no accountability in online courses.
  - iii. Online students are lonelier.

- iv. There are no instructors in online courses.
- v. Online courses and their credits do not transfer.



### Lesson-Level Organizational Strategy

The online learning orientation will be presented through the use of procedural and declarative knowledge. According to Smith and Ragan (2005), “declarative knowledge is essential to learning intellectual skills, where declarative knowledge helps make the intellectual skills more meaningful” (p. 153). The introduction to the orientation will provide instruction on how to navigate the tutorial and the purpose of completing it. By explaining the purpose at the beginning learners will understand how helpful the orientation may be as they begin their first online course. Once on the main menu, learners will select the topic they would like to learn about first. Learners

will be asked to complete all three sections but will be able to select the order in which they complete them. By giving the learners freedom to navigate through based on their interests and schedule, it is hoped that the learners will be motivated to retain the information in a stress-free environment.

During the first section, which focuses on Desire2Learn (D2L) navigation, learners will be presented with objectives, videos, and questions to check their understanding. The objectives are presented before each video to assist learners in watching for important topics. The videos provide learners with insight into the D2L platform. Afterwards, learners will be asked questions pertaining to the information shared. Learners will be asked to locate specific areas on the D2L platform through the use of images. Additionally, learners will be asked to match terms to the correct definitions that were introduced in the D2L videos. By practicing with images and matching terms, learners will reinforce their comprehension of the material presented (Smith & Ragan, 2005).

In the second section, Skills to Succeed, learners will be presented with tips and techniques to manage time and stress levels. Explanations and examples will be shown to the learners to reinforce the importance of managing both time and stress levels. Near the end of the section, learners will complete a quiz to test for comprehension of time management techniques. Additionally, a learning style quiz will be provided to learners as a supplemental, ungraded assignment to assist learners in understanding if they will be a good fit to take an online course.

In the third section, the focus will be on online learning myths. Learners will be asked “Fact or Fiction” on several common misconceptions. After deciding, learners will be presented with the facts about online learning to help discredit the myth while informing the learner more about online learning at St. Cloud State University specifically. After the information is presented, learners will be asked to recall the facts presented. This will assist in reinforcing the content that was previously presented.

The tutorial will keep track of the answers provided by the learner during their training. Upon completion, learners will be able to access their score. Additionally, they will be given the chance to learn where to find additional information and/or ask for help with online learning at St. Cloud State University.

Aligned Learning Outcomes, Instructional Strategies, and Assessments

Learning Outcomes	Instructional Strategies	Assessments
Learning Goal: Upon completion of the tutorial, learners will understand how to navigate their online course and have skills to succeed at being an online learner.	State Instructional Outcomes: Expectations will be presented visually at the beginning of each section.	This assessment is both formative and summative. Formative while the tutorial is being completed through “end of section” questions. Summative will occur at the end of the tutorial through a final score.
1.1 Given an overview of Desire2Learn, learners will navigate to the “course selection” location within the mobile interface and navigate to the system check on the login	<p><b>1. Gain attention.</b> Learners will be presented with a brief introduction of the material.</p> <p><b>2. Inform the learner of the objectives.</b> The learner will be presented visually with the objective prior to beginning</p>	1.1 Your task will be to demonstrate you know where to enter a course from the mobile interface and to run a system check on the web version of Desire2Learn. Upon

<p>screen within 2 attempts.</p> <p>1.2 Given an overview of Desire2Learn, learners will match course tools, specific to D2L, with the type of information found within that tool with no more than one error.</p> <p>1.3 Given a list of study skills, learners will be able to identify time management techniques and proper stress management techniques with no more than one error for each list provided.</p> <p>1.4 Given a list of common online learning myths, learners will be able to determine which statements are true and which statements are false with no more than one error.</p>	<p>the section.</p> <p><b>3. Stimulate the recall of prerequisite learning.</b> The learner will be asked to build on familiarity with concepts of grade keeping and attendance taking from previous teaching experience or student teaching.</p> <p><b>4. Present the stimulus materials.</b> The learner will see instructional videos and will be provided information about where to go for more assistance.</p> <p><b>5. Provide learning guidance.</b> Learners can repeat videos or refer to the information page when they need assistance.</p> <p><b>6. Elicit Performance.</b> Learners will be asked to complete two questions about the material presented.</p> <p><b>7. Provide feedback.</b> As the learner completes the two questions, he/she will receive feedback according to his/her responses.</p> <p><b>8. Assess performance.</b> Learners will be given the correct answer and will see a final score at the end of the tutorial.</p> <p><b>9. Enhance retention and transfer.</b> Learners will have the opportunity to reinforce their knowledge by completing a quiz at the completion of the tutorial.</p>	<p>completion you should be able to complete the task. A short quiz will be given where the learner identifies which area needs to be selected.</p> <p>1.2 Your task will be to match the definition to the term associated with a specific tool in Desire2Learn. Upon completion of the video, you will understand the purpose of each tool. One question will be asked immediately following the video to assess your knowledge.</p> <p>1.3 Your task will be to select effective time and stress management techniques when presented with a list of tips. After the material is presented, you should be able to select proper techniques. A short quiz will be given at the end of the section.</p> <p>1.4 Your task will be to differentiate between online learning facts and myths. In order to ensure understanding, the learner will answer fact or fiction about several statements. Feedback will be</p>
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	Opportunity to re-take the tutorial at any time will also allow the learner to revisit any section he/she was struggling with.	provided immediately upon answer selection.
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### Evaluation

Formative evaluations are conducted during the instructional design process. There are several stages of formative evaluation: design review, expert review, learner validation, and ongoing evaluation (Smith & Ragan, 2005). The design review is intended to confirm and review the design process and the instructional materials (Smith & Ragan, 2005). The second task is to have the instructional materials evaluated by the subject matter expert; third, learners should have the opportunity to review the instructional materials through specific learners evaluating the material (Smith & Ragan, 2005). In the online learner orientation, formative evaluation will be tested by faculty members at St Cloud State University. Also it will be reviewed by three undergraduate learners individually. The formative evaluation will be used to determine how well the instructional materials will fulfill the learning goal. The questions asked during the formative evaluation are below.

#### Formative Evaluation Questions:

1. Are you able to understand the content of the lesson?
2. Are the lesson guidelines simple and clear?
3. Can you navigate freely through the lesson?
4. Do the photographs help you to connect to the content of the lesson?
5. Can you locate help and results?

6. Are the assignments appropriate for beginners?
7. Which part of the lesson did you find most helpful?
8. Which aspect of the lesson did you find confusing? How would you like to see them improved?
9. Was any part of the lesson difficult to understand?
10. Are there any pieces of the lesson missing?
11. Does the presentation/lesson flow?
12. Any additional questions and/or comments

Following the formative evaluation, the orientation will be released to the Center for Continuing Studies to use with a small group of online undergraduate courses. Summative evaluation will take place after implementation. Continuing studies will ask learners to provide feedback on their experiences with the orientation. Learners who are new to the online course environment may not initially have the skills necessary to successfully complete their online course. The summative evaluation will focus on how learners perceived the orientation and if they found it to be helpful in learning to navigate Desire2Learn and in locating St Cloud State University's support services (for example, the help desk and academic learning center). Additionally, they may be asked to complete a quiz at the end of the semester to see what they remembered from the online learner orientation. Determining if the online learners retain the information that was presented will help to show if the orientation was effective. However, it will also be important to address the dropout rate and the number of complaints reported after implementation of the orientation.

Upon completion of the fall semester, the Center for Continuing Studies should compare the previous year's dropout rate to the current dropout rate for the courses in which the online learner orientation was implemented. Additionally, a review of the ticketed complaints should also be compared. After evaluating the results, changes should be made to the orientation between fall and spring semester, prior to a campus wide roll-out, as needed.

### Conclusion


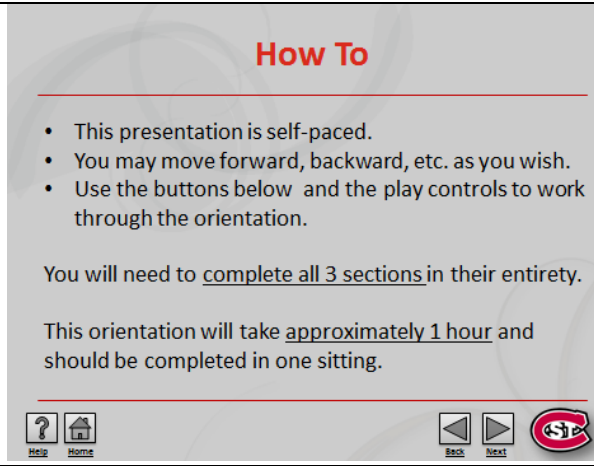
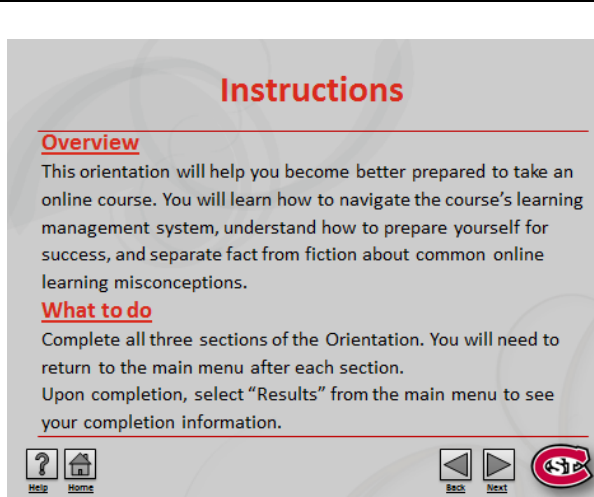
In summary, the tutorial will be conducted asynchronously by individual learners through the use of declarative knowledge. The learners will gather information about the university's online program while learning helpful techniques and background information about online learning in general. Some constraints could be a disinterest from learners who believe they know all of the information that is being presented. The tutorial however, will help to ensure all learners that are entering their first online course at St. Cloud State University are on the same page come the initial day of class.


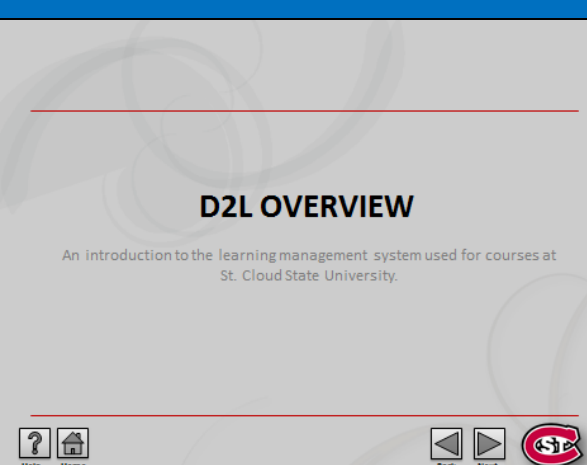
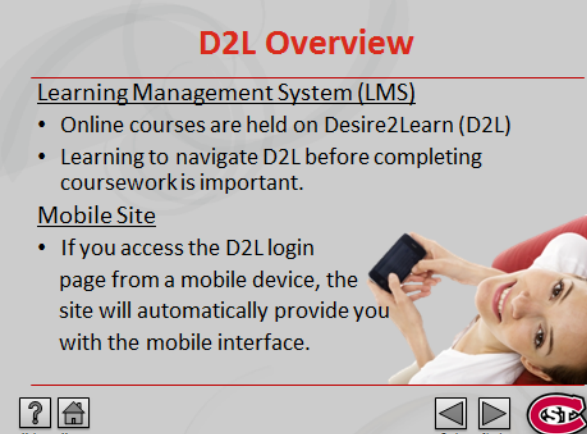


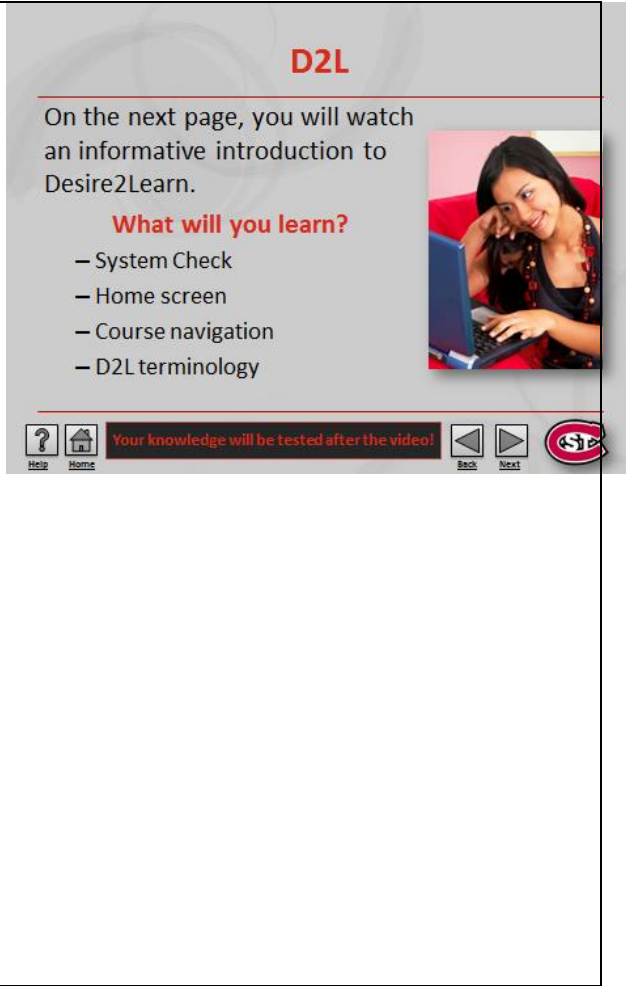
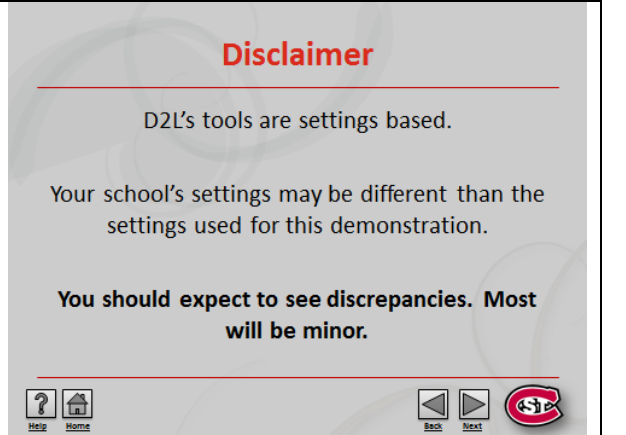
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## Appendix: Storyboard

<p>Slide 1: Title</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Text – Online Learner Orientation</p> <p>Animate the text using school colors</p>	 <p>The slide features a light gray background with a faint circular pattern. At the top, a red horizontal line is followed by the title "Online Learner Orientation" in a large, bold, black serif font. At the bottom, there is a navigation bar with icons for Help (a question mark), Home (a house), Back (a left arrow), Next (a right arrow), and a circular logo with the letters "SLP".</p>
<p>Slide 2: How To</p> <p>Objective:</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Clearly state how to complete the tutorial.</p>	 <p>The slide has a light gray background with a faint circular pattern. The title "How To" is centered at the top in a bold, red sans-serif font. Below the title, there is a bulleted list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This presentation is self-paced.</li> <li>• You may move forward, backward, etc. as you wish.</li> <li>• Use the buttons below and the play controls to work through the orientation.</li> </ul> <p>Below the list, a paragraph states: "You will need to <u>complete all 3 sections</u> in their entirety." Another paragraph follows: "This orientation will take <u>approximately 1 hour</u> and should be completed in one sitting." At the bottom, there is a navigation bar with icons for Help, Home, Back, Next, and the SLP logo.</p> </p>
<p>Slide 3: Instructions</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Explain the importance of this tutorial and its purpose.</p>	 <p>The slide has a light gray background with a faint circular pattern. The title "Instructions" is centered at the top in a bold, red sans-serif font. Below the title, there are two sections: <p><b>Overview</b> This orientation will help you become better prepared to take an online course. You will learn how to navigate the course's learning management system, understand how to prepare yourself for success, and separate fact from fiction about common online learning misconceptions.</p> <p><b>What to do</b> Complete all three sections of the Orientation. You will need to return to the main menu after each section. Upon completion, select "Results" from the main menu to see your completion information.</p> <p>At the bottom, there is a navigation bar with icons for Help, Home, Back, Next, and the SLP logo.</p> </p>

<p>Slide 4: Main Menu</p> <p>Objective:</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Users should be able to easily select their topic of choice. There are 3 sections with a quiz/results page at the end.</p>	
<p>Section: D2L Overview</p> <p>Slide 5: D2L Overview</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Introduction slide to the 1<sup>st</sup> section.</p>	
<p>Slide 6: D2L Overview</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Explain what this section will cover.</p> <p>Include image of student accessing his/her course.</p>	

<p>Slide 7: D2L part 1 Objective slide</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Given an overview of Desire2Learn, learners will successfully navigate the web and mobile interface within 2 attempts.</li> <li>2. Given an overview of Desire2Learn, learners will match course tools, specific to D2L, with the type of information found within that tool within two attempts.</li> </ol> <p>Notes: Provide objectives specific to what will be discussed in the following video.</p> <p>Let user know they will be asked questions afterwards.</p> <p>Image of student working online.</p>	 <p><b>D2L</b></p> <p>On the next page, you will watch an informative introduction to Desire2Learn.</p> <p><b>What will you learn?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– System Check</li> <li>– Home screen</li> <li>– Course navigation</li> <li>– D2L terminology</li> </ul> <p>Your knowledge will be tested after the video!</p> <p>Help Home Back Next</p>
<p>Slide 8: Disclaimer about D2L settings</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Include a brief message about how D2L settings are different for all schools</p>	 <p><b>Disclaimer</b></p> <p>D2L's tools are settings based.</p> <p>Your school's settings may be different than the settings used for this demonstration.</p> <p><b>You should expect to see discrepancies. Most will be minor.</b></p> <p>Help Home Back Next</p>

Slide 9: FMR – D2L Overview for students

Notes:

This will be an introduction video for users on D2L. Created on version 9.2 previously

**Script:** D2L is a learning management system which is used by students to access course materials through a standard web browser. Students can access a variety of course materials including course content, grades, discussions, assignment submission, and quizzes.

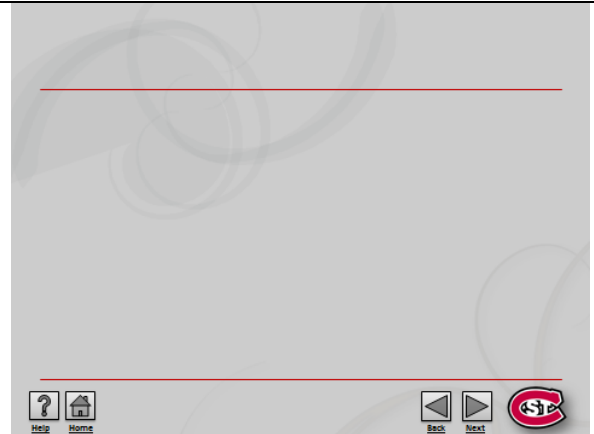
A system check will allow you to make sure your computer has the appropriate software installed to run D2L. You will only need to do a system check the first time you use a particular computer.

To do a system check, click the link. (do) You will be brought to a new screen. If your computer is compatible with D2L, you will see all green checks on the left side of the screen. If something is not correct, you will need to follow the steps provided to update your computer.

Once your machine is updated with the required components, it should be ready to go. You may now return to your schools D2L login screen. Sign in with your credentials. (do)

You will immediately be brought to your homepage. Here, you can edit your preferences. (click preferences) Within preferences, you may upload a photo and add personal information. (return to home)

Also, on the home screen, the classes that



you are enrolled in will be shown. To enter a course, click on it. Each professor will have the ability to change the look of their courses but the basic layout will be the same. At the top will always be a navigation bar. On the navigation bar, there will be several different tools available to you. Most commonly used tools include: New items, content, discussion, dropbox, quiz, and grades.

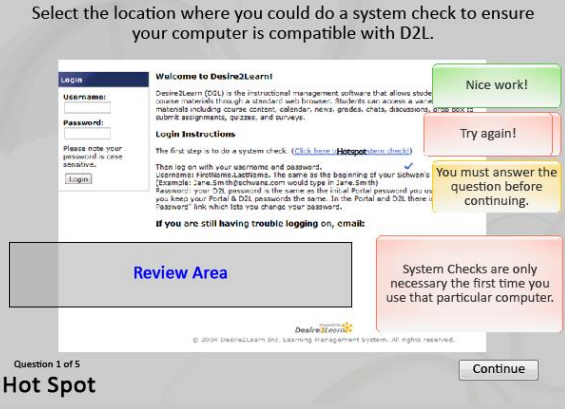
When entering a course, you will always see News Items first. The News tool is a place only for teachers to post. Normally, they will post course updates here, such as upcoming events, assignment changes, etc.

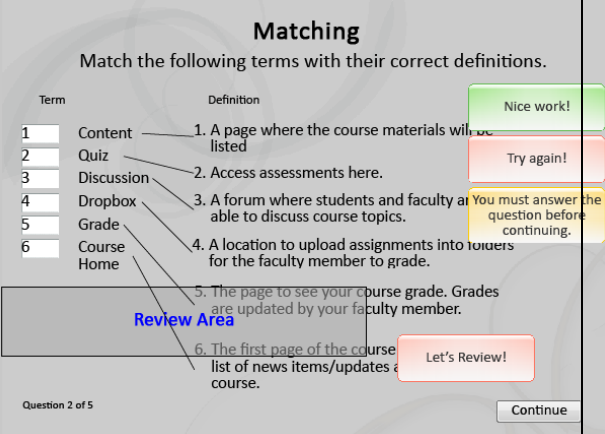
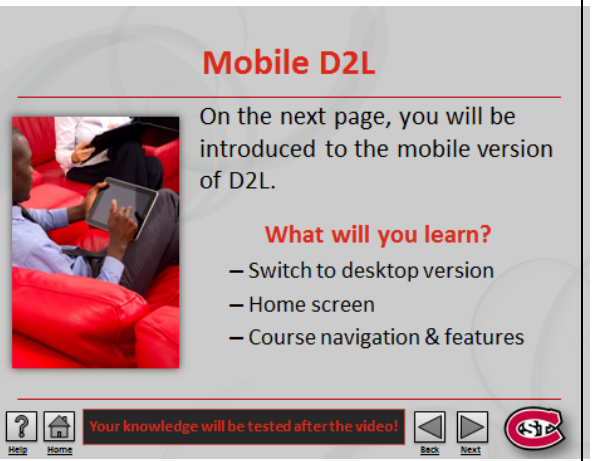
To navigate to a different tool within D2L, click on its icon located on the navigation bar. The content tool is a place where teachers can share assignments, reading materials, and activities by uploading files, linking websites, and sharing course materials. This page will form a basic outline for the course.

The discussion tool has forums and topics. A forum is category for the topics to be placed in, only teachers can type in the forum. Under the forum, topics are created. Students may post discussion responses and respond to other students within different topics. (Open compose) Images, files, and audio may be added to your discussion posts as well.

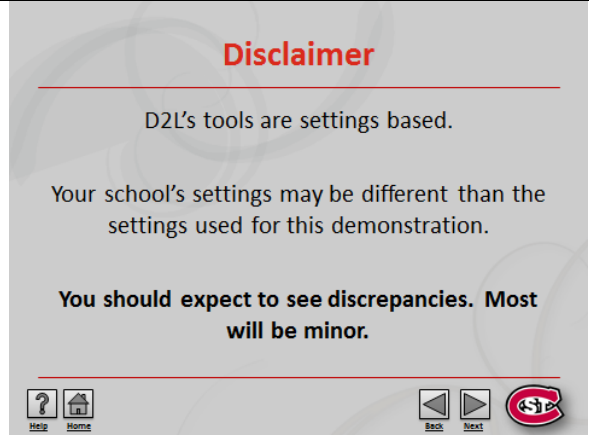
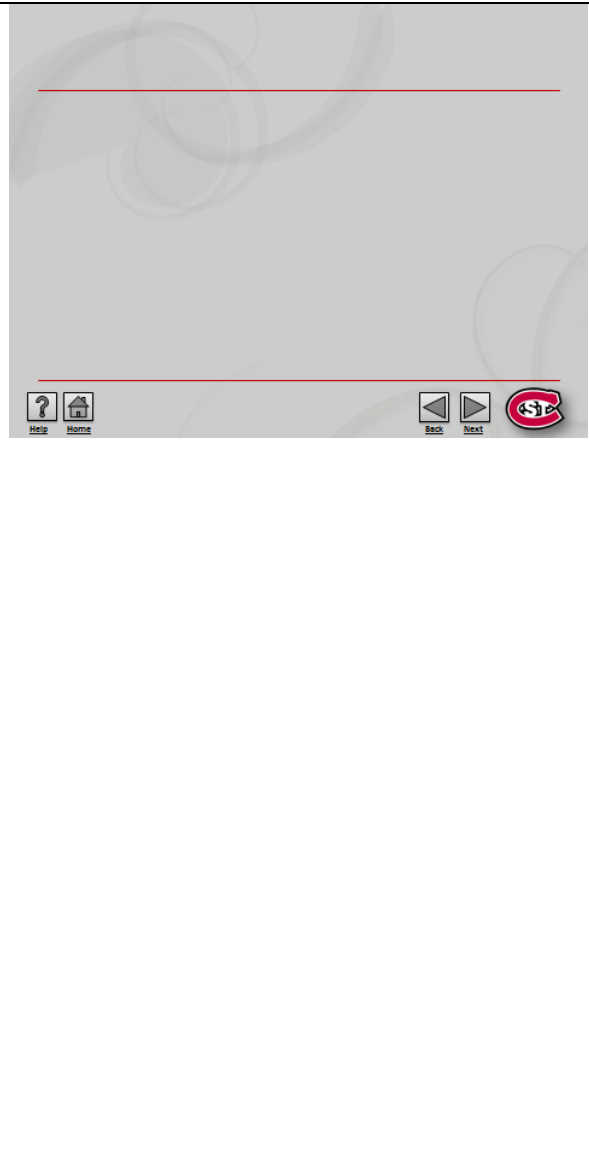
Dropbox is a tool where the teacher will post a folder for each assignment they would like turned in electronically. As a student, you will select the assignment folder, upload your file, and submit the assignment. From here, your assignment is officially turned in.

The quiz tool is where teachers may post

<p>quizzes that you will need to take for their course.</p> <p>By selecting the grades button, a list of your current course assignments and their point value will appear. Note: the teacher must manually assign points for a majority of your assignments. They will not show up in the grade book until the teacher has had a chance to review and grade your assignment.</p> <p>You should always log out. To do this, select the log out button from the navigation bar.</p> <p>This completes the student overview of D2L.</p>	
<p>Slide 10: D2L Question</p> <p>(Hot Spot)</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Screenshot of login page.</p> <p>Ask users to select where to do a system check.</p> <p>Provide hints and help information: System checks are important to complete the first time you use a new computer to access D2L.</p>	 <p>Select the location where you could do a system check to ensure your computer is compatible with D2L.</p> <p>Question 1 of 5 <b>Hot Spot</b></p> <p>Continue</p>

<p>Slide 11: D2L Question</p> <p>(Matching)</p> <p>Notes</p> <p>Match the terms to the definition:</p> <p>Content, Quiz, Discussion, Dropbox, Grade, Course Home</p>	
<p>Slide 12: Mobile Objective</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Given an overview of Desire2Learn, learners will successfully navigate the web and mobile interface within 2 attempts.</li> <li>2. Given an overview of Desire2Learn, learners will match course tools, specific to D2L, with the type of information found within that tool within two attempts.</li> </ol> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Provide objectives specific to what will be discussed in the following video.</p> <p>Let user know they will be asked questions afterwards.</p> <p>Image of student working online.</p>	



<p>Slide 13: Disclaimer about D2L settings</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Include a brief message about how D2L settings are different for all schools</p>	
<p>Slide 14: FMR – D2L Mobile for students</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>This will be an introduction video for users on how to use the D2L mobile site.</p> <p>Script: D2L has a mobile interface for users who want to access D2L from mobile devices such as an iPhone, Android, or iPad. When a user logs on to D2L from the web browser on a mobile device, D2L detects the device and automatically takes the user to the mobile interface, which provides access to the most commonly used tools that work well on a small screen.</p> <p>When logging in to the mobile app, you will see several things on the home screen.</p> <p>A Welcome box to show which user is logged in.</p> <p>An Events area with items from your D2L course calendars</p> <p>A News section, on the home page this will show system news, not class news. However, when you enter a specific course, then you will see relevant class</p>	

news.

Above these items is a small tool icon and your school name. By touching the school name you can toggle between courses. By touching the tool icon you will see several D2L tools.

A Home button, that will return you to the course home page, a content button, which will bring you to the course content, a discussion button allowing you to access the course discussion board, a news button which will show you your course newsfeed, a bookmark button for content you would like to access quickly, a grades button to show your grades, and the log out button.

After selecting your course, you can choose which D2L area you would like to navigate too.

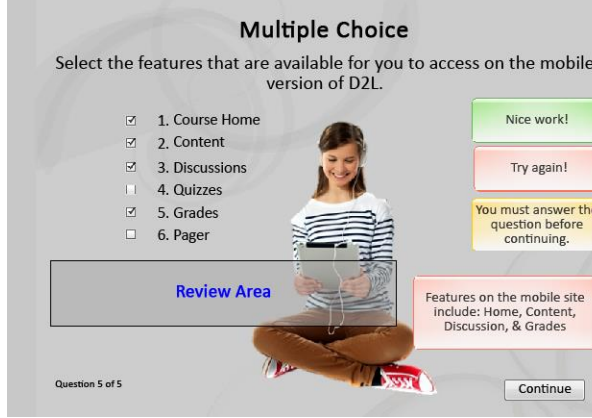
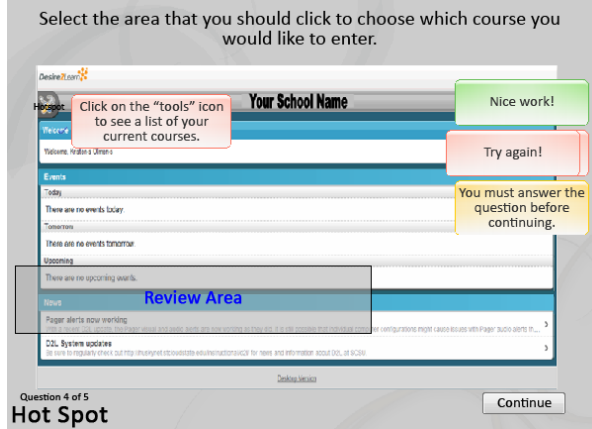
From within content, you will see three things, Bookmarked topics (specific things you have saved), Recently viewed topics, and a table of contents containing several folders of course materials.

















By touching a specific folder, you will be shown a list of materials posted. Most often these are articles and PowerPoints. Touch a specific item to open, bookmark and/or download it to your device.

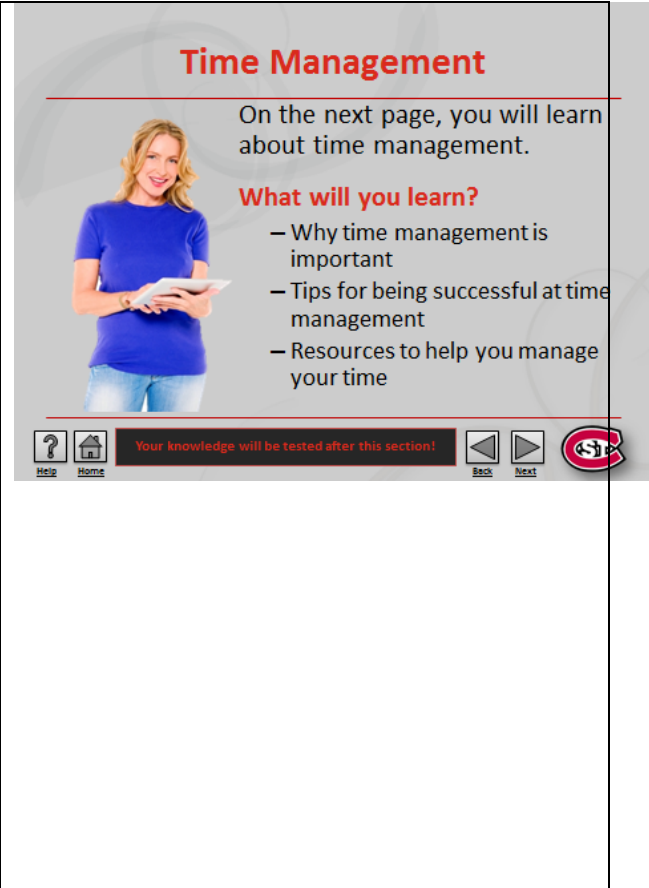
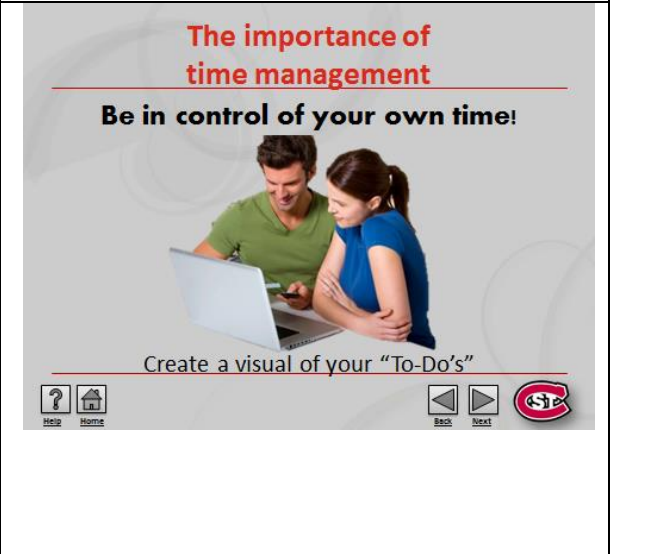
In the Discussion area, you may compose, read, and reply to topics. First, select the topic. Then you will see a list of different posts. You may start a new discussion thread by selecting compose, or you may reply to a previously posted message. Once finished, select save.













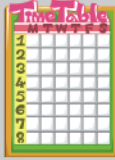






The next feature is News. From here you may view the course newsfeed. By touching a specific news item, you may open and read the full story.

Finally, the last feature in the mobile interface is grades. By choosing the grade button, you will see a list of all items in

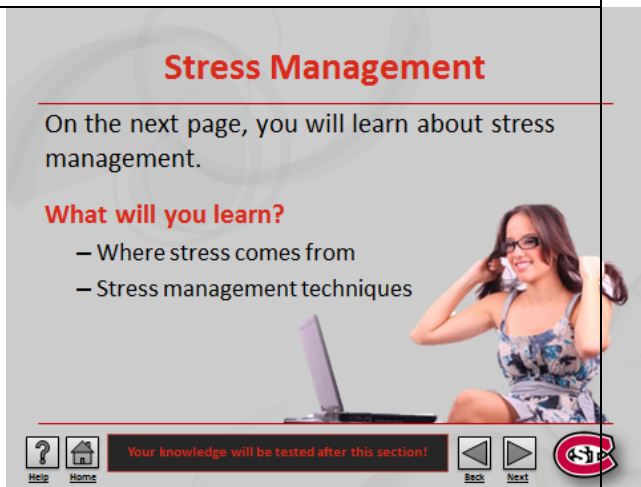
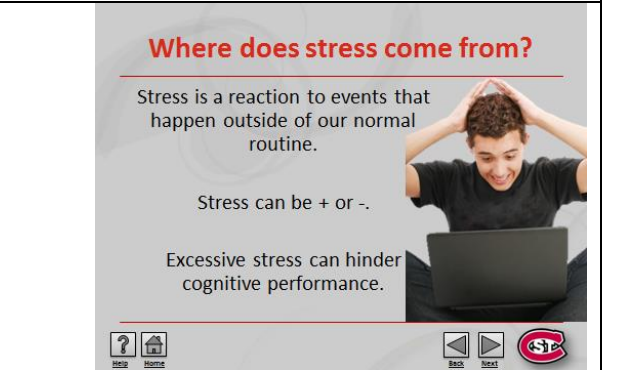
<p>the grade book. To view more information about a specific assignment touch the assignment. Here you will view instructor feedback, see your received score, the class average, and the grade distribution graph.</p> <p>Remember, to change between courses, you must use the drop down menu at the top. This has been a brief overview of what the D2L mobile interface can do for you.</p>	
<p>Slide 15: D2L Question – Mobile question</p> <p>Multiple-Choice</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Select the features that are available for access on the mobile site.</p> <p>Course Home, Content, Discussion, Grades (all of the above). Not included: Quizzes, Pager</p> <p>Provide Hint and help tip. On final attempt, give the answer.</p> <p>Image – if space, include student using mobile device</p>	 <p><b>Multiple Choice</b></p> <p>Select the features that are available for you to access on the mobile version of D2L.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. Course Home</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. Content</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3. Discussions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 4. Quizzes</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5. Grades</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 6. Pager</li> </ul> <p>Nice work!</p> <p>Try again!</p> <p>You must answer the question before continuing.</p> <p>Review Area</p> <p>Features on the mobile site include: Home, Content, Discussion, &amp; Grades</p> <p>Question 5 of 5</p> <p>Continue</p>
<p>Slide 16: D2L Question – Mobile</p> <p>Hot Spot</p> <p>Notes: Screenshot of mobile site. Ask user to locate the area they would click to enter their course.</p> <p>Provide help and answer after 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt.</p>	 <p>Select the area that you should click to choose which course you would like to enter.</p> <p>Nice work!</p> <p>Try again!</p> <p>You must answer the question before continuing.</p> <p>Review Area</p> <p>Question 4 of 5</p> <p>Hot Spot</p> <p>Continue</p>

<p>Slide 17: More information</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Where to get more information about D2L and technology help at SCSU</p>	<div data-bbox="797 262 1399 730"> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Want More?</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Login to D2L to find your courses: <a href="http://huskynet.stcloudstate.edu/instructional/d2l/default.asp">http://huskynet.stcloudstate.edu/instructional/d2l/default.asp</a></li> <li>• Contact the SCSU Help Desk</li> </ul> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Phone</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">(320) 308-2077</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Email</td> <td style="padding: 2px;"><a href="mailto:helpdesk@stcloudstate.edu">helpdesk@stcloudstate.edu</a></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Web</td> <td style="padding: 2px;"><a href="http://huskynet.stcloudstate.edu/helpdesk/request.asp">http://huskynet.stcloudstate.edu/helpdesk/request.asp</a></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">On Campus</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">Atwood Memorial Center or Miller Center B43</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">Facebook</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">HelpDesk@SCSU</td> </tr> </table> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <span> </span> <span> </span>  </div> </div>	Phone	(320) 308-2077	Email	<a href="mailto:helpdesk@stcloudstate.edu">helpdesk@stcloudstate.edu</a>	Web	<a href="http://huskynet.stcloudstate.edu/helpdesk/request.asp">http://huskynet.stcloudstate.edu/helpdesk/request.asp</a>	On Campus	Atwood Memorial Center or Miller Center B43	Facebook	HelpDesk@SCSU
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On Campus	Atwood Memorial Center or Miller Center B43										
Facebook	HelpDesk@SCSU										
<p>Section: Skills to Succeed</p> <p>Slide 18: Skills To Succeed Overview</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Introduction slide to the 1<sup>st</sup> section.</p>	<div data-bbox="797 730 1399 1220"> <h2 style="text-align: center;">SKILLS TO SUCCEED</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">This section will introduce techniques to help you become a better online learner.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <span> </span> <span> </span>  </div> </div>										
<p>Slide 19: Skills to Succeed Overview</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Explain what this section will cover.</p> <p>Include image of student accessing his/her course.</p>	<div data-bbox="797 1220 1399 1669"> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Skills to Succeed Overview</h3> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div style="padding-left: 20px;"> <p>Management of <b>time</b> and <b>stress</b> are two major factors in succeeding in an online course.</p> <p>In this section, we will take a look at them both.</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <span> </span> <span> </span>  </div> </div>										


<p>Slide 20: Objective Slide Time Management</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Given information on successful study skills, learners will be able to identify time management techniques and proper stress management techniques within two attempts.</li> </ol> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Provide objectives specific to what will be discussed in the following slides</p> <p>Let user know they will be asked questions afterwards.</p> <p>Image of student studying working computer</p>	 <p><b>Time Management</b></p> <p>On the next page, you will learn about time management.</p> <p><b>What will you learn?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Why time management is important</li> <li>– Tips for being successful at time management</li> <li>– Resources to help you manage your time</li> </ul> <p>Help Home Your knowledge will be tested after this section! Back Next CSU</p>
<p>Slide 21: What is time management?</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Control your own time, visual to-dos</p> <p>Text: Add with animation:</p> <p>With a variety of activities in your life (school, job, family, friends, etc.), your life will soon be hectic! Time saving is essential!</p> <p>Image: Couple working together to manage time</p>	 <p><b>The importance of time management</b></p> <p><b>Be in control of your own time!</b></p> <p>Create a visual of your "To-Do's"</p> <p>Help Home Back Next CSU</p>











<p>Slide 22: Time Management Tips</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Scheduling tips from Academic Learning Center</p>	<h3 style="text-align: center;">Time Management Tips</h3> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a term schedule <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Write out all due dates (assignments, exams, etc.) from course syllabi</li> <li>– Include other activities and events</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Make a weekly schedule <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Fill in class, work, activities for a typical week</li> <li>– Schedule times to study for every class (include study breaks)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Be realistic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Include time for fun!</li> <li>– It won't be perfect right away</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <span> </span> <span> </span> <span></span> </div>
<p>Slide 23: Tools to help with time management</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Provide 4 resources for time management:</p> <p>D2L, Google, remember the milk, hitask.</p>	<h3 style="text-align: center;">Time Management Tools</h3> <hr/> <p>There are many online task and calendar tools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the calendar in D2L!</li> <li>• Google Calendar</li> <li>• Remember the Milk (.com)</li> <li>• Hitask (.com)</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: right;">  </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <span> </span> <span> </span> <span></span> </div>
<p>Slide 24: Remember!</p> <p>Notes: Find your own style</p>	<h3 style="text-align: center;">Most importantly...</h3> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">Figure out what works for YOU, and stick with it!</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">    </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <span> </span> <span> </span> <span></span> </div>
<p>Slide 25: question</p> <p>Multiple Choice</p> <p>Why is time management important?</p>	

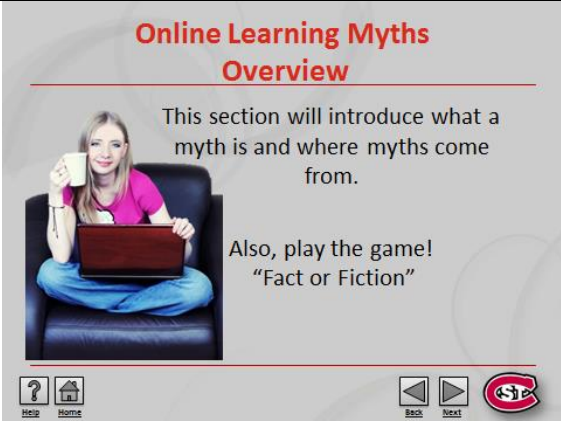
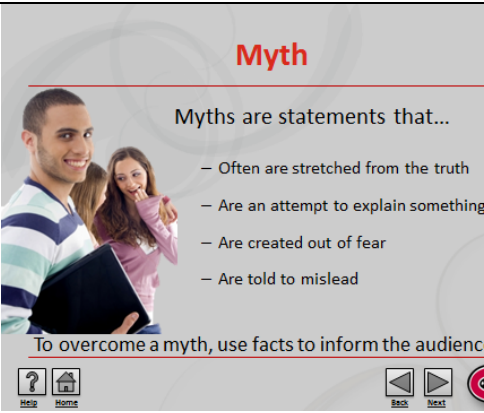
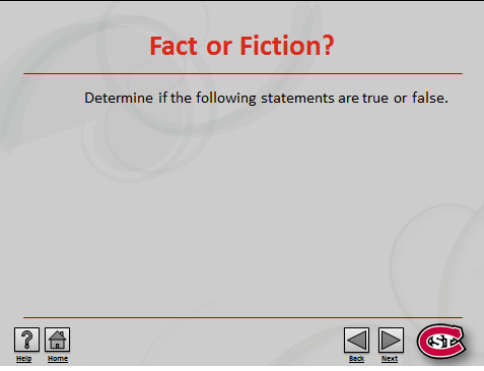
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It helps you to stay better organized and less stressed.</li> <li>2. Because making calendars is fun!</li> <li>3. It is essential to make time for your friends every day.</li> </ol> <p>Correct: 1. Right! Staying organized will help you manage your time and stress levels!</p> <p>Incorrect: Managing your time well will help to reduce your stress levels and ensure you have plenty of time to do activities you love!</p> <p>Image: if room, include an image about time management (students)</p>	
<p>Slide 26: question</p> <p>Multiple Choice</p> <p>What is one way to better manage your time?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Keep a calendar of your “To Do’s”</li> <li>2. Read your textbook</li> <li>3. Call a friend</li> <li>4. Study</li> </ol> <p>Correct: 1. Right! A visual “To Do” list is a great way to help you ensure everything gets done!</p> <p>Incorrect: Consider creating a visual “To Do” list. It is a great way to help you ensure everything gets done!</p> <p>Image: if room, include a schedule/visual cue about the to-do list.</p>	

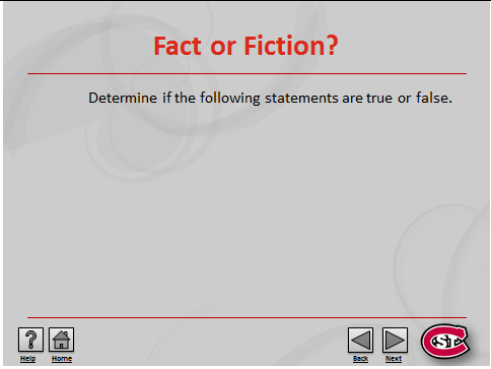
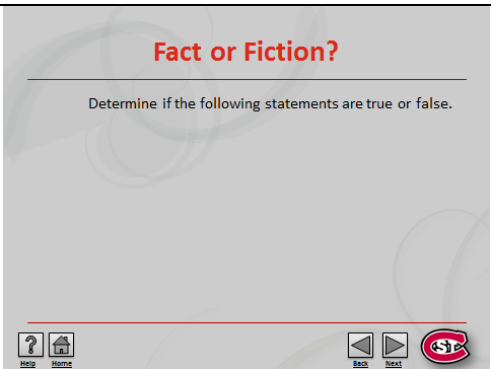
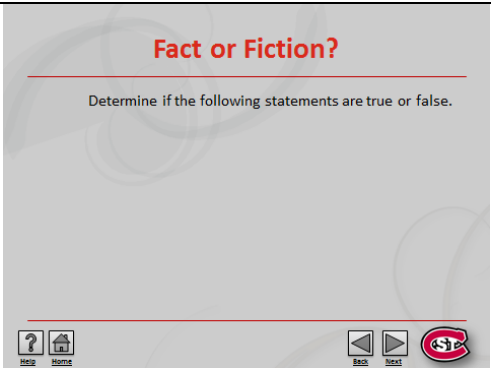
<p>Slide 27: Objective Slide</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Given information on successful study skills, learners will be able to identify time management techniques and proper stress management techniques within two attempts.</li> </ol> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Provide objectives specific to what will be discussed in the following slides</p> <p>Let user know they will be asked questions afterwards.</p> <p>Image of stressed student studying on computer</p>	 <p><b>Stress Management</b></p> <p>On the next page, you will learn about stress management.</p> <p><b>What will you learn?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Where stress comes from</li> <li>– Stress management techniques</li> </ul> <p>Your knowledge will be tested after this section!</p> <p>Help Home Back Next</p>
<p>Slide 28: Where from?</p> <p>Notes: Summary of what/where stress comes from.</p> <p>Image: Stressed out student</p>	 <p><b>Where does stress come from?</b></p> <p>Stress is a reaction to events that happen outside of our normal routine.</p> <p>Stress can be + or -.</p> <p>Excessive stress can hinder cognitive performance.</p> <p>Help Home Back Next</p>

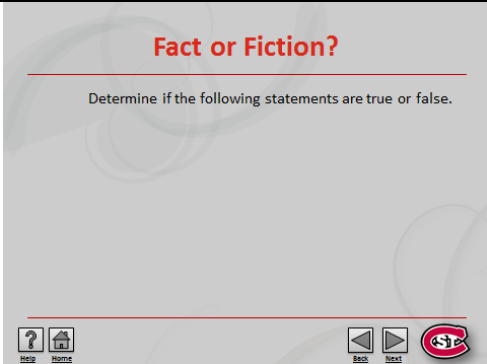
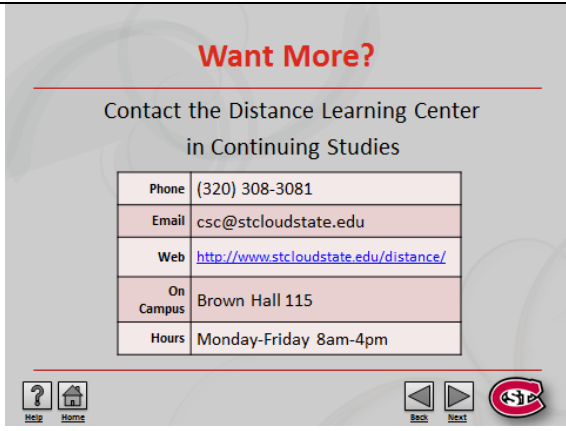


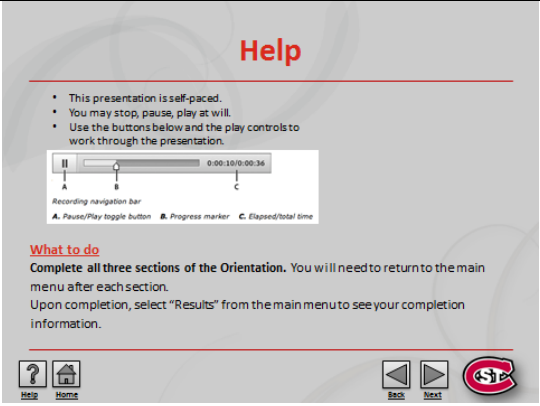
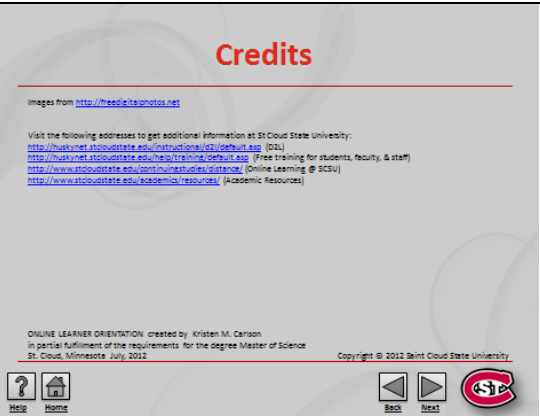
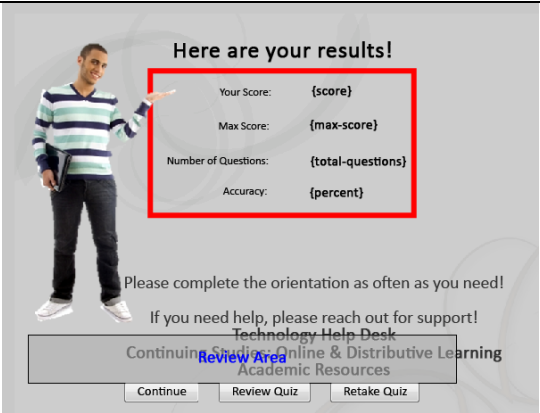
<p>Slide 29: Techniques for managing</p> <p>Notes: Deal with the stress effective –</p> <p>Nutrition, exercise, sleep, time mgmt., fun</p> <p>Image: relaxed student working on computer</p>	
<p>Slide 30: Question –</p> <p>Fill in the blank</p> <p>Stress is a reaction to events that happen <u>outside</u> of our normal routine.</p> <p>Correct: Great job!</p> <p>Incorrect: Stress comes from factors outside of our daily routine.</p> <p>Image: If room, student working (perhaps outside?) ☺</p>	
<p>Slide 31: Question</p> <p>Multiple-Multiple Choice</p> <p>Select the answers that are helpful ways to manage your stress.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Eat healthy</li> <li>2. Exercise</li> <li>3. Sleep</li> <li>4. Procrastinate</li> <li>5. Multi-task</li> </ol> <p>Correct: 1,2,3. Right! Taking good care of yourself will help to improve your stress levels!</p>	

<p>Incorrect: there are 3 correct answers!</p> <p>Incorrect 2: Taking care of yourself is essential to managing your stress. Be sure to eat healthy, exercise, and get a good nights sleep!</p> <p>Image: Healthy student(s)</p>											
<p>Slide 32: More information</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Where to get more information about academic at SCSU</p> <p>Provide buttons to outside resources – Learning style quiz, pdf handout of studying tips</p>	<div style="text-align: center;"> <h2 style="color: red;">Want More?</h2> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• View these outside resources</li> <li>• Contact the Academic Learning Center</li> </ul> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td>Phone</td> <td>(320) 308-4993</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Email</td> <td>alc@stcloudstate.edu</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Web</td> <td><a href="http://www.stcloudstate.edu/alc/">http://www.stcloudstate.edu/alc/</a></td> </tr> <tr> <td>On Campus</td> <td>Centennial Hall 236</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hours</td> <td>Monday-Friday 8am-4pm</td> </tr> </table> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; gap: 5px;"> <span> Help</span> <span> Home</span> </div> <div style="display: flex; gap: 5px;"> <span> Back</span> <span> Next</span> <span></span> </div> </div> </div>	Phone	(320) 308-4993	Email	alc@stcloudstate.edu	Web	<a href="http://www.stcloudstate.edu/alc/">http://www.stcloudstate.edu/alc/</a>	On Campus	Centennial Hall 236	Hours	Monday-Friday 8am-4pm
Phone	(320) 308-4993										
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Web	<a href="http://www.stcloudstate.edu/alc/">http://www.stcloudstate.edu/alc/</a>										
On Campus	Centennial Hall 236										
Hours	Monday-Friday 8am-4pm										
<p>Section: Online Learning Myths</p> <p>Slide 33: Online learning myths Overview</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Introduction slide to the 3<sup>rd</sup> section.</p>	<div style="text-align: center;"> <h2 style="margin: 0;">ONLINE LEARNING MYTHS</h2> <p style="font-size: small; margin: 5px 0;">This section will explore misconceptions of the online learner.</p> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; gap: 5px;"> <span> Help</span> <span> Home</span> </div> <div style="display: flex; gap: 5px;"> <span> Back</span> <span> Next</span> <span></span> </div> </div>										

<p>Slide 34: Myths Overview</p> <p>Objective:</p> <p>4. Given a list of common online learning myths, learners will be able to determine which statements are true and which statements are false within two attempts.</p> <p>Notes: Explain what this section will cover.</p> <p>Include image of student accessing working on a computer</p>	
<p>Slide 35: What is a myth?</p> <p>Notes: Explanation of where myth comes from/ how created</p> <p>Image: students telling secrets or whispering to one another</p>	
<p>Slide 36: Question –</p> <p>Notes: Fact or Fiction?</p> <p>Online courses are easier than traditional.</p> <p>Pop ups – Correct: Fiction. Often, online courses require more of a time commitment than traditional courses.</p> <p>Incorrect: Fact. This isn't always true. Often, online courses require more time.</p>	

<p>Slide 37: Question</p> <p>Notes: Fact or Fiction?</p> <p>There is no accountability in online courses.</p> <p>Pop ups – Correct: Fiction. All of the online courses at SCSU adhere to the academic policies just like on campus courses do.</p> <p>Incorrect: Fact. Actually, all courses whether on campus or online follow SCSU academic policies.</p>	
<p>Slide 38: Question</p> <p>Notes: Fact or Fiction?</p> <p>Online students are lonelier.</p> <p>Pop ups – Correct: Fiction. Often, students are able to discuss and interact more frequently online.</p> <p>Incorrect: Fact. Online courses often allow learners to work at their own time and place. This often times makes interacting with other classmates more enjoyable.</p>	
<p>Slide 39: Question</p> <p>Notes: Fact or Fiction?</p> <p>There are no instructors in online courses.</p> <p>Pop ups – Correct: Fiction. Each SCSU course has a faculty member that is assigned to the course. They will communicate with you on a regular basis.</p>	

<p>Incorrect: Fact. All SCSU online courses have a faculty member assigned to the course just like a traditional course would. You should be in contact with your instructor on a regular basis.</p>											
<p>Slide 40: Question</p> <p>Notes: Fact or Fiction?</p> <p>Online courses and their credits do not transfer.</p> <p>Pop ups: Correct: Fiction. SCSU online courses transfer much like their face-to-face counterparts. To see how a specific course would transfer visit: <a href="http://www.mntransfer.org">www.mntransfer.org</a></p> <p>Incorrect – Fact. SCSU online courses transfer much like their face-to-face counterparts. To see how a specific course would transfer visit: <a href="http://www.mntransfer.org">www.mntransfer.org</a></p>	 <p>The slide features a title 'Fact or Fiction?' in red, followed by the instruction 'Determine if the following statements are true or false.' Below the text is a navigation bar with icons for 'help', 'home', 'back', 'next', and the SCSU logo.</p>										
<p>Slide 41: More information</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Where to get more information about online learning at SCSU</p>	 <p>The slide features a title 'Want More?' in red, followed by the text 'Contact the Distance Learning Center in Continuing Studies'. Below this is a table with contact information:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="938 1457 1279 1640"> <tr> <td>Phone</td> <td>(320) 308-3081</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Email</td> <td><a href="mailto:csc@stcloudstate.edu">csc@stcloudstate.edu</a></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Web</td> <td><a href="http://www.stcloudstate.edu/distance/">http://www.stcloudstate.edu/distance/</a></td> </tr> <tr> <td>On Campus</td> <td>Brown Hall 115</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hours</td> <td>Monday-Friday 8am-4pm</td> </tr> </table> <p>Below the table is a navigation bar with icons for 'help', 'home', 'back', 'next', and the SCSU logo.</p>	Phone	(320) 308-3081	Email	<a href="mailto:csc@stcloudstate.edu">csc@stcloudstate.edu</a>	Web	<a href="http://www.stcloudstate.edu/distance/">http://www.stcloudstate.edu/distance/</a>	On Campus	Brown Hall 115	Hours	Monday-Friday 8am-4pm
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Web	<a href="http://www.stcloudstate.edu/distance/">http://www.stcloudstate.edu/distance/</a>										
On Campus	Brown Hall 115										
Hours	Monday-Friday 8am-4pm										
<p>Section: Outside Slides</p>											

<p>Slide 42: Help</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Provide instructions on how to navigate the tutorial and what to do within the tutorial.</p> <p>This slide should be linked to all slides via the “Help” button.</p>	 <p>The screenshot shows a slide titled "Help" with a red header. It contains a list of instructions: "This presentation is self-paced.", "You may stop, pause, play at will.", and "Use the buttons below and the play controls to work through the presentation." Below the text is a "Recording navigation bar" with a progress marker and a timer showing "0:00:10/0:00:34". A legend identifies the bar as "Recording navigation bar", the play button as "A. Pause/Play toggle button", the progress marker as "B. Progress marker", and the timer as "C. Elapsed/total time". A section titled "What to do" instructs the user to "Complete all three sections of the Orientation" and return to the main menu after each section. It also says to select "Results" from the main menu upon completion. At the bottom, there are navigation icons for Help, Home, Back, Next, and a red circular arrow icon.</p>								
<p>Slide 43: Credits</p> <p>Notes:</p> <p>Include all image resources used. Additionally, provide all links for where to find extra information on these topics.</p> <p>If room, add an image of a student taking an online course</p>	 <p>The screenshot shows a slide titled "Credits" with a red header. It lists image sources from "http://freedigitalphotos.net". It provides several URLs for additional information at St. Cloud State University, including links to the Orientation page, a training page for students, faculty, and staff, an online learning page, and an academic resources page. At the bottom, it credits Kristen M. Carlson for creating the "ONLINE LEARNER ORIENTATION" in partial fulfillment of requirements for a Master of Science degree at St. Cloud, Minnesota, in July 2012. The copyright is listed as © 2012 Saint Cloud State University. Navigation icons for Help, Home, Back, Next, and a red circular arrow icon are at the bottom.</p>								
<p>Slide 44: Results Page</p> <p>Give the user their results on the Cp Quiz Results page.</p> <p>Provide friendly “look” by including an image of a student and a reminder of how to get help.</p>	 <p>The screenshot shows a slide titled "Here are your results!" with a red border around the results table. On the left, there is an image of a student in a striped shirt. The results table is as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="998 1150 1263 1297"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Your Score:</td> <td>{score}</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Max Score:</td> <td>{max-score}</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of Questions:</td> <td>{total-questions}</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Accuracy:</td> <td>{percent}</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Below the table, it says "Please complete the orientation as often as you need!" and "If you need help, please reach out for support!". There is a "Technology Help Desk" logo and a "Review Area" button. At the bottom, there are three buttons: "Continue", "Review Quiz", and "Retake Quiz".</p>	Your Score:	{score}	Max Score:	{max-score}	Number of Questions:	{total-questions}	Accuracy:	{percent}
Your Score:	{score}								
Max Score:	{max-score}								
Number of Questions:	{total-questions}								
Accuracy:	{percent}								

## ONLINE LEARNER ORIENTATION: PART 2

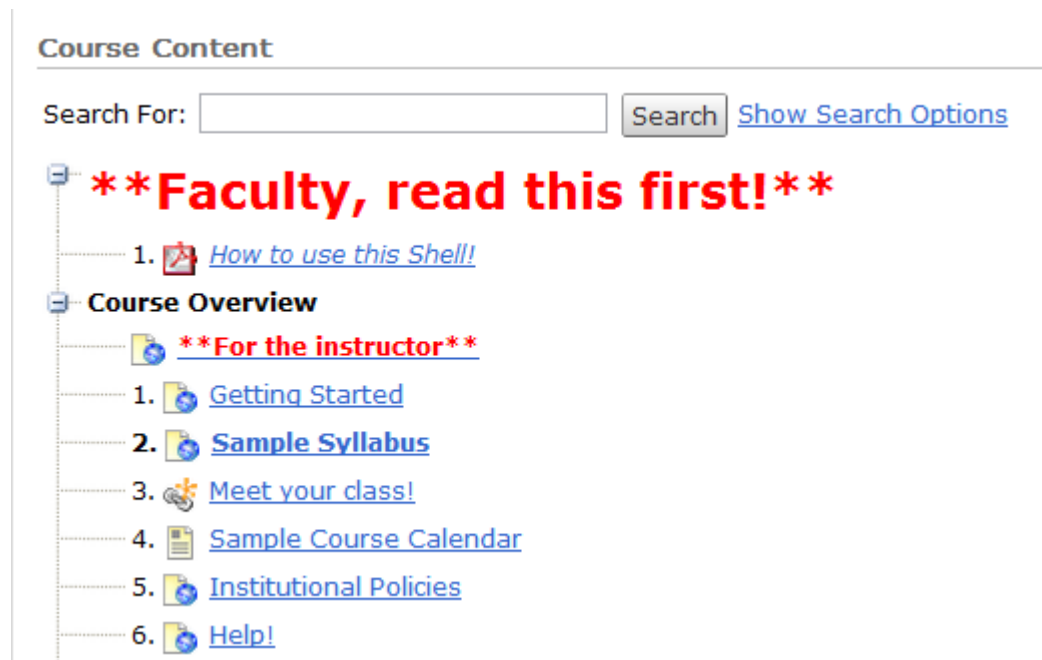
The online learner orientation training may be accessed by going to <http://media4.stcloudstate.edu/onlineorientation>. Additionally, the training may be found on the compact disc associated with this portfolio. Below is a screen shot of the main menu which outlines the topics that will be presented during the training. A detailed storyboard with text and images can be found at the end of the design document from part one.



*This is a screen shot of the main menu for the Online Learner Orientation.*

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: D2L COURSE SHELL


The Desire2Learn course shell was created to follow the 2011-2013 Quality Matters Rubric, as described in chapter three. The course may be found at <https://stcloudstate.ims.mnscu.edu/d2l/lp/homepage/home.d2l?ou=1738903>. Below are screenshots of the course. The red hyperlinks indicate instructions for the faculty member about how to use each particular section.










**Course Content**

Search For:   [Show Search Options](#)

**\*\*Faculty, read this first!\*\***

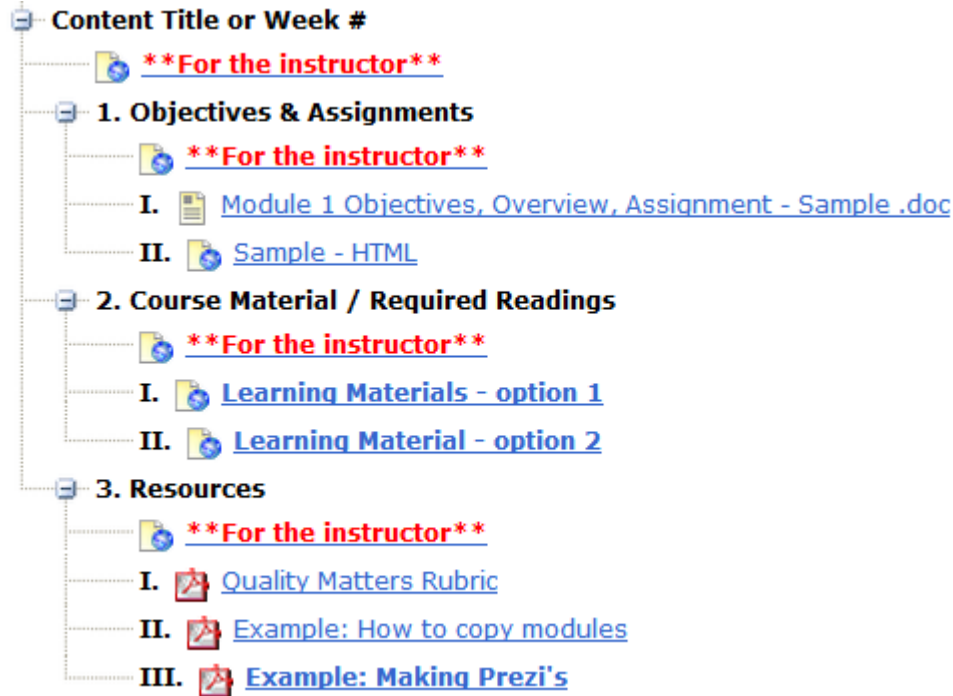
1.  [How to use this Shell!](#)

**Course Overview**

1.  **[\\*\\*For the instructor\\*\\*](#)**
1.  [Getting Started](#)
2.  [Sample Syllabus](#)
3.  [Meet your class!](#)
4.  [Sample Course Calendar](#)
5.  [Institutional Policies](#)
6.  [Help!](#)

*Faculty members are given instructions regarding the purpose of the course shell and how to begin using the files. The course overview provides templates and sample documents for the faculty member to modify as needed.*





*The content portion of the course is designed to allow faculty members to copy the section layout for each unit or week within their course.*

Within the first module, students should find access to all course information regarding policies, requirements, schedules, and obtaining help.

In the course overview, students should be able to locate the following:

- 1) How to get started [QM 1.1]
- 2) Course syllabus
  - a) Course information [QM 1.2, 1.5]
  - b) Faculty information [QM 1.7]
  - c) How to get started [QM 1.1]
  - d) Course description [QM 2.1]
  - e) Class procedures [QM 1.2, 1.3, 5.4]
  - f) Technical requirements [QM 1.6]
  - g) Assignments & Grades [QM 3.2, 3.3, 5.3, 5.4]
  - h) Accommodations [QM 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 8.1]
  - i) Calendar information
- 3) Course Schedule/Calendar
- 4) Course and University policies [QM 1.4]
- 5) An introduction area for classmates. [QM 1.8]
- 6) Where/How to get help [QM 7.1]

*The “For the instructor” documents outline the material that are contained within the section and which standard on the Quality Matters rubric they follow.*

## Chapter 5

### REFLECTIONS

The completion of my three projects were beneficial in allowing me to understand the skills needed to conduct a research based, instructional design project. Working on the three projects allowed me to make new connections with experts on campus that I had never imagined would be interested in my portfolio projects. Although I had originally planned to complete the design document and orientation project first, I found myself most excited to complete the Desire2Learn (D2L) course shell.

I particularly enjoyed creating the Desire2Learn course shell that followed the Quality Matters (QM) rubric. This rubric was used in the creation of the course shell based on the literature review completed in chapter two. Specifically, in the study conducted by Diaz and Blazquez (2009), it was found that students were better able to interact with the course curriculum when the course was structured and organized. Through the creation of sample documents such as a syllabus, discussion thread, and learning objectives the faculty members who enter the course shell would get a feel for how a QM standard course would look.

This project was immediately recognized by St Cloud State University's Director of Online Learning as impressive. It felt great to know that I was able to

contribute to the campus in a helpful way. Prior to wrapping up my projects, I had the opportunity to present the course shell to the on-campus “Quality Matters” working group. Attendees of the group approved of the shell that I had created and were interested in discussing implementation plans for the campus community. At this time, there are no significant changes that I would make to this project. I am highly satisfied with the outcome. However, I do understand that D2L will be upgraded in the future which may mean small changes for the shell.

After creating the D2L course shell, I began work on the design document that would prepare me for authoring the online learner orientation. While assessing my audience through the online learner survey that was conducted in fall 2011 by the Center for Continuing Studies, I was reminded of the diversity of the learners who would be accessing the orientation. On Saint Cloud State’s campus, learners enrolling in their first online, undergraduate course were often non-traditional learners (Center for Continuing Studies, 2012). According to Oblinger (2008), non-traditional learners have less computer experience than traditional learners. It was important to keep this in mind while writing my design document and determining how the orientation would function. I went with basic navigational functionality, specifically, “home”, “forward”, and “back”. This would make navigating the orientation straightforward for those with minimal computer use.

In addition to making the orientation easy to use, I was aware of the need to provide new learners with support services. When conducting the literature review in chapter two, I learned that online learners did not always know where to go for

support. A study conducted by Mullen and Tallent-Runnels (2006) found that it is important to provide online learners with support services similar those offered on campus for traditional learners. Because of this finding, I gave information for several different services for online undergraduate learners in the online learner orientation. The three sections of the orientation discussed how to utilize D2L, time and stress management, and online learning perceptions. At the end of these sections, I provided learners with web addresses, phone numbers, and physical offices where they could get help with any of these topics. When I had finished writing the design document, I was able to begin authoring the orientation.

The design document was beneficial when beginning to author the Online Learner Orientation program. I was able to use a previous screen design and two previously created Desire2Learn (D2L) full motion recordings. This was helpful because I know longer have access to the training rooms that the recordings were created in. To me, the orientation wouldn't be complete without some training on D2L. Upon authoring the orientation, I began a formative evaluation to gather thoughts from undergraduate learners, faculty members, and SCSU's online director.

The formative evaluation was completed by only a handful of faculty members. The evaluations were appreciative of the perceptions section and the discussion about time management. I am glad this was found to be helpful because it is not something I had thought in-depth about until conducting research on online perceptions. I was surprised to read feedback about the D2L videos being too much information and that they perhaps should not be included in the orientation. When I

began working with D2L for the very first time, it was nothing like the previous learning management system I had used which caused me a lot of stress in the beginning of my courses. Being technology-savvy, I would and still do, think that non-traditional learners would have a more difficult time than I did! According to Tham and Werner (2002), learners who do receive training on the learning management system are better equipped to learn the course material. This is most likely because learners are not struggling to move around the system but are able to spend their time working with the course content. Through my research, I am confident in saying that learners do need experience with the learning management system prior to beginning their coursework.

Overall, I feel I have a better understanding about how to determine when training is necessary and/or may be helpful for the intended audience. The literature review and experience gained from completing my three projects allowed me to intelligently participate in conversations with on-campus experts about St Cloud State's online learning plans for the future. I believe that this experience will help to make me more marketable when searching for my dream job.

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## APPENDICES

## Appendix A

### SCSU Online and Distributed Learning

**SCSU Online & Distributed Learning  
Visioning & Planning Task Force**  
*Dec. 6, 2011*

Provost Malhotra is convening an Online & Distributed Learning Visioning & Planning Task Force. The task force will be charged with:

- Developing a vision for on-line and distributed learning at St. Cloud State University
- Identifying best practices, standards and procedures that will facilitate the growth of high-quality on-line learning at St. Cloud State University, including:
  - Effective use of course development resources
  - Professional development
  - Funding, resource allocation and staffing
  - Establishment of standards to guide work across units
  - Market analysis and program opportunities
- Identifying critical strategies and initiatives for achieving the vision
- Seeking and incorporating campus input into the plan

The SCSU Online & Distributed Learning Visioning & Planning Task Force will be co-chaired by Orn Bodvarsson, Interim Dean of the School of Public Affairs and a faculty representative from the Task Force. The task force will consist of:

- Dean of Continuing Studies
- Six faculty representatives
- 2 College/School Deans
- Director of Distributed Learning (CCS)
- Director of Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

- Director of Records and Registration
- One representative from:
  - Admissions
  - School of Graduate Studies
  - IT services
  - IT IS/IMS representative
  - Student Life and Development
  - Undergraduate Education & Student Support Services
  - Center for International Studies

The task force will develop the plan and manage review and approval through the full Strategic Planning Committee and the University's Management Team. The work should be completed by the end of the spring 2012 semester.

## Appendix B

### Proposed Minimum Standards for Asynchronous Courses



## **Proposed Minimum Standards for Asynchronous Courses**

**Information Media Department**

1/31/12

### **Definition of an Asynchronous Course**

An asynchronous course is one in which the students and the instructor are not in the same location and students complete course requirements on an independent schedule within the restrictions place by the instructor. Students and the instructor do not meet as a single unit. Students and the instructor engage in instructional activities through electronic means including, but not limited to e-mail, tools within course management systems (such as Discussion and Dropbox in D2L), web based conferencing systems (such as Adobe Connect), wikis, blogs, and teleconference software (such as Skype).

### **Minimum Standards**

#### Course Overview and Introduction

1. The instructor will provide the following course materials to students at the beginning of the course:
  - a. Course topics and schedule
  - b. Student requirements
  - c. The grading policy
  - d. Instructor contact information
  - e. The requirements for student interaction, both student-to-student and student-to-instructor
  - f. Required course materials, (i.e. textbook, Internet connection)

### Goals and Objectives

1. Goals and objectives are provided to students and aligned with learning strategies employed in the class.
2. All learning goals and objectives from the official course syllabus must be met.

### Course Design

1. Learning activities provide opportunities for support information exchange and knowledge construction throughout the course.
2. Specific opportunities for instructor-student interaction are provided at least 10 times throughout the course schedule.
3. Strategies are employed to develop a student learning community.

### Assessment and Evaluation

1. The types of assessments selected measure the learning objectives and are consistent with course activities and resources.
2. Specific criteria are provided for the evaluation of students' work and participation.
3. Students have multiple opportunities to measure their learning progress.
4. Students are provided with opportunities to give feedback on the course.

### Accessibility

1. Courses are offered within the university academic calendar to facilitate registration and posting of grades.
2. All posted readings and materials will be accessible in formats supported by the university to insure student access, i.e. MS Word, Acrobat.

3. Faculty conduct online office hours on a weekly basis consistent with the IFO contract.

#### Additional Standards

1. Departments have the right, through a democratic process, to determine the courses that are to be offered asynchronously.
2. Asynchronous students are held to the same university and department policies and standards as on-campus students.
3. Faculty are required to implement FERPA and HIPPA laws in a manner that protects private student data, i.e. e-mail should not be used to distribute private information without student permission.

Appendix C

Quality Matters™ Rubric 2011-2013

## Quality Matters™ Rubric 2011-2013

### Standards

<b>Course Overview and Introduction</b>	1.1 Instructions make clear how to get started and where to find various course components.	3
	1.2 Students are introduced to the purpose and structure of the course.	3
	1.3 Etiquette expectations (sometimes called “netiquette”) for online discussions, email, and other forms of communication are stated clearly.	2
	1.4 Course and/or institutional policies with which the student is expected to comply are clearly stated, or a link to current policies is provided.	2
	1.5 Prerequisite knowledge in the discipline and/or any required competencies are clearly stated.	1
	1.6 Minimum technical skills expected of the student are clearly stated.	1
	1.7 The self-introduction by the instructor is appropriate and available online.	1
	1.8 Students are asked to introduce themselves to the class.	1
<b>Learning Objectives (Competencies)</b>	2.1 The course learning objectives describe outcomes that are measurable.	3
	2.2 The module/unit learning objectives describe outcomes that are measurable and consistent with the course-level objectives.	3
	2.3 All learning objectives are stated clearly and written from the students’ perspective.	3
	2.4 Instructions to students on how to meet the learning objectives are adequate and stated clearly.	3
	2.5 The learning objectives are appropriately designed for the level of the course.	3
<b>Assessment and Measurement</b>	3.1 The types of assessments selected measure the stated learning objectives and are consistent with course activities and resources.	3
	3.2 The course grading policy is stated clearly.	3
	3.3 Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of students’ work and participation and are tied to the course grading policy.	3
	3.4 The assessment instruments selected are sequenced, varied, and appropriate to the student work being assessed.	2
	3.5 Students have multiple opportunities to measure their own learning progress.	2
<b>Instructional Materials</b>	4.1 The instructional materials contribute to the achievement of the stated course and module/unit learning objectives.	3
	4.2 The purpose of instructional materials and how the materials are to be used for learning activities are clearly explained.	3
	4.3 All resources and materials used in the course are appropriately cited.	2
	4.4 The instructional materials are current.	1
	4.5 The instructional materials present a variety of perspectives on the course content.	1
	4.6 The distinction between required and optional materials is clearly explained.	1

<b>Learner Interaction and Engagement</b>	5.1 The learning activities promote the achievement of the stated learning objectives.	3
	5.2 Learning activities provide opportunities for interaction that support active learning.	3
	5.3 The instructor's plan for classroom response time and feedback on assignments is clearly stated.	3
	5.4 The requirements for student interaction are clearly articulated.	2
<b>Course Technology</b>	6.1 The tools and media support the course learning objectives.	3
	6.2 Course tools and media support student engagement and guide the student to become an active learner.	3
	6.3 Navigation throughout the online components of the course is logical, consistent, and efficient.	3
	6.4 Students can readily access the technologies required in the course.	2
	6.5 The course technologies are current.	1
<b>Learner Support</b>	7.1 The course instructions articulate or link to a clear description of the technical support offered and how to access it.	3
	7.2 Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's accessibility policies and services.	3
	7.3 Course instructions articulate or link to an explanation of how the institution's academic support services and resources can help students succeed in the course and how students can access the services.	2
	7.4 Course instructions articulate or link to an explanation of how the institution's student support services can help students succeed and how students can access the services.	1
<b>Accessibility</b>	8.1 The course employs accessible technologies and provides guidance on how to obtain accommodation.	3
	8.2 The course contains equivalent alternatives to auditory and visual content.	2
	8.3 The course design facilitates readability and minimizes distractions.	2
	8.4 The course design accommodates the use of assistive technologies.	2

Use of this 2011 Quality Matters™ Rubric document is restricted to institutions that subscribe to the Quality Matters™ Program and may not be copied or duplicated without written permission of MarylandOnline.

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*The Quality Matters rubric for online course set-up for the years 2011-2013.*

APPENDIX D

Scholarly Research that Informed and Supported the Development of the 2011-2013 Quality Matters Higher Education Rubric

Scholarly research that informed and supported the development of the 2011-2013 Quality Matters Higher Education Rubric. The references documented here expand the body of scholarly literature compiled in 2005 and 2008 in support of the QM Rubric standards. Completed by Kay Shattuck and William C. Diehl during the 2010/2011 Winter

<b>General Standards 5 &amp; 6</b>	
<p>Roblyer, M.D., McDaniel, M., Webb, M., Herman, J., &amp; Witty J.V. (2010). Findings on Facebook in higher education: A comparison of college faculty and student uses and perceptions of social networking sites. <i>The Internet and Higher Education</i>, 13(3), 134-140</p>	<p>Study reports that students are more open to use of Facebook than are teachers. Study was with convenient, self-selected students, not necessarily fully online students.</p>
<p>Uzuner, S (2009). Questions of culture in distance learning: A research review. <i>International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning</i>, 10(3)  <a href="http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/690/1273">http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/690/1273</a></p>	<p>The article provides a research review of 27 studies which focused on the issue of culture in distance learning. Branch's (1993) definition of culture is offered: "The patterns shaped by ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status, geography, profession, ideology, gender, and lifestyle" (Branch, 1993, 7). Recommendations for practice from the studies include: "To alleviate student anxieties [resulting from strong uncertainty avoidance cultural traditions], course structure should be transparent with clear expectations for participation, assignments, learning activities, team work, grading, submission dates, and assessment". Creation of a safe place for sharing should be included if active participation in discussion is an expectation. Providing opportunities for students' to establish their "presence" is important. Instructors/designers should consider that "challenging and criticizing others' ideas may not be considered culturally appropriate in some cultural groups and that constructivist-pedagogy might be disengaging for students from cultural perspectives. (11-13). A related resource (Parrish &amp; Linder-VanBerschoot's Cultural Dimensions of Learning: Addressing the challenges of multicultural instruction) can be found at <a href="http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/809/1497">http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/809/1497</a></p>



<b>General Standards 1 &amp; 5</b>	
<p>Yen, C., &amp; Tu, C. (2008). Online social presence: A study of score validity of the computer-mediated communication questionnaire. <i>Quarterly Review of Distance Education</i>, 9(3), 297-310,348.</p>	<p>This study looked at social presence and its influence on online interaction. The authors conclude that social presence is multidimensional and "composed of 4 factors as hypothesized in the theoretical framework: social context, online communication, interactivity, and privacy, although revision of some test items was also suggested by the results." The purpose of the study was to "conduct a confirmatory factor analysis of the Computer-Mediated Communication Questionnaire scores."</p>
<b>General Standards 1 &amp; 2</b>	
<p>Cameron, B., Morgan, K., Williams, K., &amp; Kostelecky, K.. (2009). Group projects: Student perceptions of the relationship between social tasks and a sense of community in online group work. <i>The American Journal of Distance Education</i>, 23(1), 20.</p>	<p>Article focuses on building a sense of community in distance courses and particularly as related to group work. Excerpt: "Without specific projects and assignments designed to support these social tasks, students appeared to focus more on getting the project done than on the social tasks."</p>
<b>General Standards 1, 2, &amp; 3</b>	

<p>Pittenger, A. &amp; Doering, A. (2010). Influence of motivational design on completion rates in online self-study pharmacy-content courses. <i>Distance Education</i> 31(3), 275-293 DOI 10.1080/01587919.2010.513953</p>	<p>When discussing the implications of their study of four online self-study pharmacy-content courses, they noted motivational factors that impacted high completion rates being "weekly emails" which connected with the learner and suggested timelines to the learner for assignments. Learners also noted "high-quality learning materials and connections made between course content and personal needs...The results of this study support the application of Keller's (1987) model when designing online self-study courses " (p. 288). The authors point out that "Motivational design utilizes educational scaffolding</p>
<p><b>General Standards 1 &amp; 3</b></p>	
<p>Sheridan, K. &amp; Kelly, M.A. (2010). The indicators of instructor presence that are important to students in online courses. <i>MERLOT Journal of Online Learning and Teaching</i>, 6(4). Available <a href="http://jolt.merlot.org/vol6no4/sheridan_1210.htm">http://jolt.merlot.org/vol6no4/sheridan_1210.htm</a></p>	<p>Found that "The indicators that were most important to students dealt with making course requirements clear and being responsive to students' needs. Students also valued the timeliness of information and instructor feedback"</p>
<p><b>General Standards 2, 3 &amp; 5</b></p>	
<p>Scripture, J. (2008). Recommendations for designing and implementing distributed problem-based learning. <i>The American Journal of Distance Education</i>, 22(4), 207.</p>	<p>Article focuses on Problem Based Learning (PBL) and discusses design elements that are factors in successful PBL inclusion.</p>
<p><b>General Standards 2, 3, 4, 5, 6</b></p>	

<p>Preston, G., Phillips, R., Gosper, M., McNeill, M, Woo, K., &amp; Green, D. (2010). Web-based lecture technologies: Highlighting the changing nature of teaching and learning. <i>Australasian Journal of Educational Technology</i>, 26(6), 717-728.</p>	<p>A report from a larger study at four Australian universities to explore how web-based lecture technologies (WBLT) can best support learning and teaching" (para 1). Conclusions: Faculty need "to clearly articulate what is involved in learning for the particular unit of study, what role the lectures and other activities play in the learning process, and the role technologies play in supporting learning"</p>
<p><b>General Standards 3,5,6</b></p>	
<p>Armstrong, D. (2011). <i>A qualitative study of undergraduate students' approaches, perceptions, and use of online tools</i>. (University of San Francisco). <i>ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, Document ID 742477661</i>.</p>	<p>This dissertation describes undergraduate students' experiences and perceptions of online courses at two religiously affiliated universities in northern California. The author found that faculty communication, use of technology, structure of learning environment and nature of assessment were influential factors.</p>
<p><b>General Standards 3 &amp; 5</b></p>	
<p>Brindley, J., E., Walti, C., &amp; Blaschke, L. M. (2009). Creating effective collaborative learning groups in an online environment. <i>International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning</i>, 10(3)</p>	<p>Authors were investigating impact on learner participation of grading of small group collaborative projects. Results of study indicated that : instructional strategies may be equally or more effective than assessment in encouraging participation (p.16)" - Those strategies include: transparency of expectations; clear instructions; appropriateness of task for group work; motivation for participation embedded in course design (group project needed to be completed in order for individuals to do final assignment); monitoring and feedback" (p. 10-11)</p>

<b>General Standards 4 &amp; 5</b>	
<p>An, Y., &amp; Reigeluth, C. (2008). Problem-based learning in online environments. <i>Quarterly Review of Distance Education</i>, 9(1), 1-16,105-106.</p>	<p>This article describes a study that looked at graduate online courses that used problem-based learning. It gives recommendations as a series of guidelines for designing and implementing problem-based learning for online courses.</p>
<b>General Standards 4 &amp; 7</b>	
<p>Li, S., Fu, Y., Zhao, X., &amp; Leh, A.(2009). Learners' preferences in using online learning resources. <i>Quarterly Review of Distance Education</i>, 10(3), 299-303,319.</p>	<p>This journal article uses action research in a graduate class and employs the Online Top-Down Modeling Model (Li &amp; Liu, 2005) and identifies eight student preferences for online learning resources. The author believes that the study will assist designers in integrating effective resources into online courses.</p>
<p><b>General Standards 4,5,6</b></p> <p>Beatham, M.D. (2008). Tools of inquiry: separating tool and task to promote true learning. <i>Journal of Educational Technology Systems</i> 37(1), 61-70.</p>	<p>The author reminds us that "Teachers must clearly distinguish for students the educational technologies (the tools or means) used to investigate a subject from the subject (the task) itself. Without this distinction, students develop critical and fundamental misconceptions about their subjects of study, usually confusing the tool for the task (p. 61). He recommends, " "make sure the task or purpose is clear. Begin with the end in mind, not the means toward the end. Tool should follow task" (p. 69).</p>

<p>Impelluso, T. (2009). Assessing cognitive load theory to improve student learning for mechanical engineers. <i>The American Journal of Distance Education</i>, 23(4), 179.</p>	<p>Article focuses on cognitive load theory and its consideration in course design; findings are that student dropout rate fell and learning increased when course was redesigned with cognitive load theory in mind - can apply to resources and materials, learner engagement and technology.</p>
<p>Diaz, V. (2010). Teaching and learning in review: Insights from the EDUCAUSE 2010 annual conference.  <a href="http://www.educause.edu/EDUCAUSE+Quarterly/EDUCAUSEQuarterlyMagazineVolum/TeachingandLearninginReviewIns/219115">http://www.educause.edu/EDUCAUSE+Quarterly/EDUCAUSEQuarterlyMagazineVolum/TeachingandLearninginReviewIns/219115</a>.</p>	<p>Summary: (1) a corresponding research methodology should accompany experimentation with emerging technologies in the current fiscal climate (2) E-textbooks must offer more than cost savings (3) The next generation of learning management systems must focus on the needs of the learner and be adaptable enough to address those needs (4) the notion of customizable instruction represents the future of online learning environments [See whole summary online for more detail.]</p>
<p><b>General Standards 4,6,7</b></p>	
<p>Basham, J.D., Meyer, H., Perry, E. (2010). The design and application of the digital backpack. <i>Journal of Research on Technology in Education</i>, 42(4), 339-359.</p>	<p>Authors introduce the digital backpack as "an instructional technology solution...based on the notions of backwards design and the UDL [Universal Design for Learning] framework" (p. 357). Backwards design "is on the desired learning outcomes rather than on the type or amount of technology to be made available in the learning environment" (p. 339). Their study found that "a strong focus on a scaffold instructional design is important to engaging all learners...students can achieve the intended learning outcomes when they have appropriate supports, structure, and focus" (p. 354). [Study was within a small group of students on collaborative projects and problems]</p>

<b>General Standards 5 &amp; 6</b>	
Kuyath, S. (2009). <i>The social presence of instant messaging: Effects on student satisfaction, perceived learning, and performance in distance education.</i> (The University of North Carolina at Charlotte). <i>ProQuest Dissertations and Theses</i> ,	This dissertation examined the use of instant messaging and its relationship to distance learner perceptions regarding social presence, quality interaction with instructor, and social isolation, amount learned, and others.
Patti, P. (2010). <i>The invisible classroom: Learning style and learner satisfaction in a virtual, audio conferenced technical training environment.</i> (Capella University). <i>ProQuest Information &amp; Learning Doc ID 822365940.</i>	This study looks at interaction and use of video technology in synchronous corporate training settings. Findings are that student dissatisfaction results from technology issues and positive experiences emerge from live video being added from the classroom.
Kear, K., Woodthorpe, J., Robertson, S., Hutchison, M. (2010). From forums to wikis: perspectives on tools for collaboration. <i>The Internet and Higher Education</i> , 13 (4), 218-225.	This journal article examines the use of a wiki for student collaboration and communication. The author found that students found the wiki to be useful for collaboration, however there was some discomfort with editing each other's work and the issue of ownership arose. The use of the wiki for communication was found to be less advantageous and slower than the more traditional forum technology. Usability and sociability are noted as key requirements for Web. 2.0 tools.
Bailey, C., Card, K. (2009). Effective pedagogical practices for online teaching: Perception of experienced instructors. <i>The Internet and Higher Education</i> , 12 (3-4), 152-155.	This journal article focuses on effective pedagogical practices and covers fostering relationships, engagement, timeliness, communication, organization, technology, flexibility, and high expectations in distance education.

<b>General Standards 5,6,7</b>	
<p>Frick, T, Chadha, R., Watson, C. Want, Y., Green, P. (2009). College student perceptions of teaching and learning quality. <i>Educational Technolgy Research and Development</i>, 57(5), 705-720.</p>	<p>This article surveyed students (undergrad and grad) at multiple institutions and used self- reporting to assess learning time, how much was learned, satisfaction with course, perceptions of mastery of objectives and global course ratings. The authors report that instructional designers and teachers can use these scales to evaluate and to provide authentic tasks, activation of prior learning, demonstrations of what is to be learned, and to complete tasks with coaching and feedback, among others.</p>

<b>General Standards 5 &amp; 6</b>	
<p>Roblyer, M.D., McDaniel, M., Webb, M., Herman, J., &amp; Witty J.V. (2010). Findings on Facebook in higher education: A comparison of college faculty and student uses and perceptions of social networking sites. <i>The Internet and Higher Education</i>,</p>	<p>Study reports that students are more open to use of Facebook than are teachers. Study was with convenient, self-selected students, not necessarily fully online students.</p>

<p>Uzuner, S (2009). Questions of culture in distance learning: A research review. <i>International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning</i>, 10(3)  <a href="http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/690/1273">http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/690/1273</a></p>	<p>The article provides a research review of 27 studies which focused on the issue of culture in distance learning. Branch's (1993) definition of culture is offered: "The patterns shaped by ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status, geography, profession, ideology, gender, and lifestyle" (Branch, 1993, 7). Recommendations for practice from the studies include: "To alleviate student anxieties [resulting from strong uncertainty avoidance cultural traditions] , course structure should be transparent with clear expectations for participation, assignments, learning activities, team work, grading, submission dates, and assessment". Creation of a safe place for sharing should be included if active participation in discussion is an expectation. Providing opportunities for students' to establish their "presence" is important. Instructors/designers should consider that "challenging and criticizing others' ideas may not be considered culturally appropriate in some cultural groups and that constructivist-pedagogy might be disengaging for students from cultural perspectives. (11-13). A related resource (Parrish &amp; Linder-VanBerschoot's Cultural Dimensions of Learning: Addressing the challenges of multicultural instruction) can be found at <a href="http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/809/149">http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/809/149</a></p>
<p><b>General Standards 1 &amp; 5</b></p>	



<p>Yen, C., &amp; Tu, C. (2008). Online social presence: A study of score validity of the computer-mediated communication questionnaire. <i>Quarterly Review of Distance Education</i>, 9(3), 297-310,348.</p>	<p>This study looked at social presence and its influence on online interaction. The authors conclude that social presence is multidimensional and "composed of 4 factors as hypothesized in the theoretical framework: social context, online communication, interactivity, and privacy, although revision of some test items was also suggested by the results." The purpose of the study was to "conduct a confirmatory factor analysis of the Computer-Mediated Communication Questionnaire scores."</p>
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<b>General Standards 5 &amp; 7</b>	
Hagan, P. (2009). <i>Exploring human connections in distance education at the post-secondary level: An Alaska experience.</i> (University of Hawai'i at Manoa). <i>ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, Document ID 304602207.</i>	This dissertation examines factors that contribute to student success in a location where students are often perceived as having low participation and graduation rates. The study suggests that social connections and technology supported activities contribute to positive outcomes.
<b>General Standards 3,5,7</b>	
Filimban, G. (2008). <i>Factors that contribute to the effectiveness of online learning technology at Oregon State University.</i> (Oregon State University). <i>ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, Document ID 304500250.</i>	This dissertation examines the relationship between critical pedagogy and online course design and best practices for traditional and online teaching that can be used. The study explores instructor, student and researcher observations.
<b>General Standards 5 &amp; 6</b>	
Junco, R., Heiberger, G., Loken, E. (2010). The effect of Twitter on college student engagement and grades. <i>Journal of Computer Assisted Learning</i> , DOI: 10.1111/j.1365-2729.2010.00387.x.	"This study provides experimental evidence [125 students] that Twitter can be used as an educational tool to help engage students and to mobilize faculty into a more active and participatory role" (p.1)

<p>Rutherford, C. (2010). Using online social media to support preservice student engagement. <i>MERLOT Journal of Online Learning and Teaching</i>, 6(4). Available <a href="http://jolt.merlot.org/vol6no4/rutherford_1210.htm">http://jolt.merlot.org/vol6no4/rutherford_1210.htm</a></p>	<p>"The results of this study indicate that there is a positive correlation between student use of a variety of social media resources and how students perceive their relationships with their fellow students and instructors as well as how they describe the overall quality of their educational experience."</p>
<p>Yun-Jo An (2010). Scaffolding wiki-based, III-structured problem solving in an online environment. <i>MERLOT Journal of Online Learning and Teaching</i>, 6(4) Available <a href="http://jolt.merlot.org/vol6no4/an_1210.htm">http://jolt.merlot.org/vol6no4/an_1210.htm</a></p>	<p>"The participants in this study reported that they depended on synchronous communication tools, rather than wikis, to discuss the project issues and make group decisions. The results of this study indicate that although wikis are effective for collaborative writing and editing, they are not very effective as a communication tool in the ill-structured problem solving process"</p>
<p><b>General Standards 6 &amp; 7</b></p>	
<p>Roblyer, M., Davis, L., Mills, S., Marshall, J., &amp; Page, L.(2008). Toward practical procedures for predicting and promoting success in virtual school students. <i>The American Journal of Distance Education</i>, 22(2), 90.</p>	<p>Student access to technology is important for student success. No course design details but research results indicate that student support in course is a factor in student success</p>
<p><b>General Standards 2,3,5,6,7</b></p>	

<p>Myers, D. (2008). <i>Assessing quality indicators in asynchronous undergraduate distance education courses</i>. (Nova Southeastern University). <i>ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, Document ID 230703083</i>.</p>	<p>The purpose of this study was to determine quality indicators in asynchronous distance education courses and final analyses indicated that "technical issues, course design, class procedures and expectations, interaction, and content delivery</p>
<p><b>General Standards 6 &amp; 8</b></p> <p>Pomales-Garcia, C., Lopez, A., &amp; Liu, Y. (2010). Design dimensions and attributes for Web-based distance learning modules. <i>The American Journal of Distance Education</i>,</p>	<p>This study addresses the design of a course in terms of clarity, organization, simplicity, structure, visual/aesthetical attractiveness, and excitement. It is included here because it provides a content analysis and also results of a study that addresses the overall visual impact and organization upon course design.</p>
<p><b>General Standards 3 &amp; 7</b></p>	
<p>Davis, D. (2010). <i>Online learning: Quality benchmarks</i>. (Pepperdine University). <i>ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, Document ID 305249452</i>.</p>	<p>Using the Institute for Higher Education's Policy's Benchmarks for Success in Internet-Based Education instrument, this study looked at quality benchmarks that included institutional support, course development, the teaching and learning process, course structure, student support, faculty support, and evaluation and assessment.</p>
<p>Himer, L. (2010). <i>Quality indicators for evaluating distance education programs at community colleges</i>. (University of Missouri – Columbia). <i>ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, Document ID 304518115</i>.</p>	<p>One of the goals of this study was to find quality indicators specific to community college online programs and another was to determine stakeholder perceptions of these indicators. A literature review identified common standards and then a group of distance learning experts were queried regarding these standards/indicators. The categories addressed were: institutional support, curriculum and instruction faculty support, student support, evaluation and assessment and technical support.</p>

<b>General Standards 5,6,7</b>	
Carranza, S. (2009). <i>A grounded theory of high-quality distance education programs: Student perspectives</i> . (The University of Wisconsin – Madison). <i>ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, Document ID 3348712</i> .	This author used a grounded theory approach. It identified high quality distance programs and interviewed students and identified 21 attributes of quality identified in five clusters. The study concluded that high-quality traditional and distance programs both contain similar attributes.
Sims, R. (2008). Rethinking (e)learning: a manifesto for connected generations. <i>Distance Education 29(2)</i> , 153-164 DOI:10.1080/01587941802154954	The author sets a discussion of design in a transitioning learner base which will not be as teacher-centered as traditional. In an increasing mobile population he advocates for c3- learning - collaborative, contextual, and connected.

**Classic literature on cross-culture/cultural inclusion**

Collis, B. (1999). Designing for differences: Cultural issues in the design of WWW-based course-support sites. <i>British Journal of Educational Technology</i> 30 (3) 201-221.	Collis (1999) provides an overview of lit and suggests, “culture affects the individual’s response to computer-related systems...culture also have a strong influence on the acceptance of, use of, and impact of learning-related interventions” (p. 202). Quotes Jin and Cortazzi (1998), in comparing the effect of class size in Western and Chinese schools, “argue that the instructional approaches in a particular instructional setting are ‘embedded in a cultural context of beliefs, expectations, and values.’” (p. 202) “WWW-based course-support sites are an example of a learning intervention involving computer technology and as such their acceptance, use, and impact will be influenced by culture-related aspects” ...”need to respond to increasingly diverse learner populations” (p. 202).
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<p>Gunawardena, C. N., Nolla, A. C., Wilson, P. L., Lopez-Islas, J. R., Ramírez-Angel, N. &amp; Megchun-Alpizar, R. M. (2001). A cross-cultural study of group process and development in online conferences. <i>Distance Education</i>, 22 (1), 85-121.</p>	<p>Gunawardena, Nolla, Wilson, Lopez-Islas, Ramirez-Angel &amp; Megchun-Alpizar (2000) found that there are significant differences in perception of Norming and Performing stages of group development in online conferencing between Mexican and US students. “Country differences rather than age and gender differences, accounted for the differences observed. Differences centered on perception of collectivism, low power distance, femininity *“(attributes such as affection, compassion, nurturance, and emotionality – Hofstede, 1984)] p. 88), and high context communication.</p>
<p>McLoughlin, C. (2001). Inclusivity and alignment: Principles of pedagogy, task and assessment design for effective cross-cultural online learning. <i>Distance Education</i>, 22 (1) 7-29.</p>	<p>McLoughlin (2001) offers a “framework for culturally inclusive pedagogy that can be applied to online environments...that links culturally inclusive learning with curriculum and assessment design, using the principle of constructive alignment...to ensure that pedagogy and curriculum are flexible, adaptable and relevant to students from a diverse range of cultural and language backgrounds” (p.7).</p>
<p>Pincas, A. (2001). Culture, cognition and communication in global education. <i>Distance Education</i>. 22 (1) 30-51.</p>	<p>Pincas (2001) “Worldwide students encounter discourse problems rather than simple language difficulties” (p. 30). “The chief problem of trying to take a socio-cultural approach to education is that it involves the contradiction between growing nationalism (or ethnocentricity) on the one hand, and global connectedness, on the other.</p>