

EPIC Quality E-Learning Standards

Part A–Getting Started/Course Information Folder

Course Navigation and Technology

The overall course design is clear to the student at the beginning of the course. Students can find a logical path through the course that is responsive to intuitive thinking. Course navigation, structure, and technology facilitate student learning.

Note: Faculty should check that when copying a course from one semester to another that course items are not duplicated. Course Entry Quiz should not be copied over.

Template Layout

For consistency, all courses should use the following layout for their course template:

- Course Entry Quiz*
- Folder named Getting Started/Course Information (Faculty will need to create)
- Units of instruction are organized in individual lesson modules or folders labeled as lessons, modules, or units (Faculty will create these based on their course organization)
- * The Course Entry Quiz should be available through the 10% point only; after that point, this item should be hidden.

Faculty should be sure to check that when copying a course from one semester to another that course items are not duplicated.

Rubric: Navigation	Met	Not Met
The course layout follows the order of the standardized template.		
Standardized course items are not duplicated.		
Course entry quiz is hidden after the 10% mark.		
The Getting Started/Course Information folder contains all the information as stated in standard Part A		

Welcome Message

A welcome message is posted and is visible when the student first enters the course at the start of the semester. A welcome message should be posted in either the Announcements area or Getting Started/Course Information folder.

The welcome message should have at least the following:

- Name of the course.
- A brief introduction to the course.

Approved -May 2023



- A few words of encouragement.
- A directive to content areas to begin the course.

Rubric: Welcome Message	Met	Not Met
Welcome message is posted in the Announcements or Getting Started/Course Information folder of the course and is easy to locate.		
Welcome message contains the name of the course, an introduction, words of encouragement, and directions to begin the course.		

Getting Started/Course Information Folder

Instructions on how to get started in the course are provided. Course instructions:

- Clearly direct students how to get started and where to find various course components.
- Introduce students to the purpose and structure of the course and how best to succeed in an online learning environment.
- Course Syllabus is posted.

Optional: Provide a web link to the Assist tool which includes a description of the services the college offers. *Note:* * URL is: <https://blackboard.waketech.edu/ultra/integration/bbAssist>

Rubric: Getting Started/Course Information Folder	Met	Not Met
Instructions clearly direct students how to get started and where to find various course components.		
Instructions introduce students to the purpose and structure of the course.		
Tips are provided on how best to succeed in an online learning environment.		
The Course Syllabus is in the Getting Started/Course Information folder		
<i>Optional:</i> A weblink is provided to the Assist tool (url: https://blackboard.waketech.edu/ultra/integration/bbAssist) is located in the Getting Started/Course Information folder		

Faculty Information

Faculty contact information is easy-to-find and provides options for multiple forms of communication and clear instructions on the preferred method of communication for the fastest response time. Information should be posted in the Getting Started/Course Information folder.

Approved -May 2023



Faculty who have earned their EPIC Online Teaching Certification or EPIC Master Online Teaching Certification can post their badge(s) in this location.

*Adjunct faculty may only have email as a form of communication.

A faculty bio/introduction is appropriate and posted to assist in building community. In addition, the self-introduction should create a sense of connection between faculty and students; it presents the faculty member as professional, friendly, and approachable.

Examples of information that help build this connection include the following (this list is not exhaustive):

- A photograph or avatar (required)
- Faculty credentials
- Colleges attended
- Hobbies
- Comments on teaching philosophy
- A summary of teaching experience
- Travel experiences
- Professional experience

Rubric: Faculty Information	Met	Not Met
Faculty's name and title are posted.		
Faculty's college email address is posted.		
Faculty's office phone number is posted. **not applicable for adjunct instructors		
Faculty's office hours are posted. **not applicable for adjunct instructors		
Faculty's office location, including campus, is posted. **not applicable for adjunct instructors		
Preferred method of contact is clearly indicated.		
Clear standards are established for faculty responsiveness and availability.		
Avatar or representative photo of faculty member is posted.		
Faculty bio/introduction is posted.		

Part B—Course Resources and Student Support

Any other course-specific content, except individual lessons, should be posted in the Getting Started/Course Information folder.

Approved -May 2023



Syllabus

A syllabus is posted in the Getting Started/Course Information folder. It is provided in a printable format, such as .docx that students can view and download. It clearly states any prerequisite knowledge in the discipline and/or any required competencies, including technical skills.

Rubric: Syllabus	Met	Not Met
Syllabus is posted in the Getting Started/Course Information folder		
Syllabus is provided in a printable format, docx or pdf, for example that students can view and download		
The course description from the NCCCS CCL or WTCC course catalog is posted.		
Prerequisite courses are clearly stated.		

Course-level Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Course-level SLOs are clearly stated and measurable. Instructional materials and assessments clearly align with course and lesson/week/module/unit SLOs. Instructional materials provide appropriate information and resources to allow students to achieve the SLOs.

- SLOs for the course are clearly stated on the syllabus.
- SLOs for the course are measurable (refer to Bloom's Taxonomy).
- SLOs directly reflect the content and expectations described in the Course Description provided by the NCCCS.
- SLOs are representative of the scope of the course.

Rubric: Course-level SLOs	Met	Not Met
SLOs for the course are clearly stated on the syllabus.		
SLOs for the course are measurable.		
SLOs directly reflect the content and expectations described in the Course Description provided by the NCCCS.		
SLOs for the course are consistent with the scope of the course.		

Course Materials

Information on Instructional Materials is present and clearly communicated:

Approved -May 2023



- Any materials (i.e., textbooks, readings, publisher materials, supplies, access keys, software, websites, multimedia, plugins, etc.) required for class are clearly communicated. The correct ISBN numbers for materials are provided when available.
- Publisher content is linked through the LMS whenever possible.
- Instructions are provided to access external publisher content and information on how the completion of this content is factored into final course grade.
- The purpose of instructional materials (both required and recommended) and how materials are to be used are clearly explained.
- The course instructional materials are relevant and aligned with the communicated learning objectives of the course.

Rubric: Course Materials (On Syllabus or included in Getting Started/Course Information folder)	Met	Not Met
Any required course materials [textbooks (including ISBN), supplies, publisher content, and/or software, etc.] are clearly stated.		
All materials are current and relevant to the course.		
The purpose of instructional materials (both required and recommended) and how materials are to be used are clearly explained.		

Grading Policy

The Course Grading Policy is transparent and available to students. Course grading policy (including weighting or points system) is posted either on the syllabus and/or as a separate item in the Getting Started/Course Information folder. Penalties assessed to grades for late or incomplete work, if applicable, and grade turnaround time are provided.

Rubric: Grading Policy (On Syllabus or included in the Getting Started/Course Information folder)	Met	Not Met
The course grade weighting or points system is clearly stated.		
The grading policy/practices are easy to understand.		
Penalties for late and/or incomplete work are clearly stated.		
Turnaround time on graded assignments and where to locate feedback within the course is clearly stated.		

Course Calendar or Schedule

Course Calendar or Schedule is provided so that students know when to expect major assignments and assessments. Course calendar or schedule includes a clear breakdown based on

Approved -May 2023



lesson/week/module/unit structure of the course either on syllabus and/or as a separate item under Course Resources. The calendar should include actual calendar dates, i.e., September 1, rather than weekly notations, i.e., Week 1. If the course calendar/schedule is a separate document it should be accessible and provided in a printable format, such as .docx.

Rubric: Course Calendar or Schedule (On Syllabus or included in the Getting Started/Course Information folder)	Met	Not Met
<i>If it is a separate document</i> - Course calendar or schedule is posted in the Getting Started/Course Information folder.		
<i>If it is a separate document</i> – Course calendar or schedule is provided in a printable format, docx or pdf, for example that students can view and download.		
The course calendar or schedule has a clear breakdown based on the structure of the course.		
Dates in the calendar or schedule are correct and reflect the current semester and year.		

Attendance Policy

The Attendance Policy is located in in the Getting Started/Course Information folder and clearly explains the following:

- What constitutes “entry” into the course (Course Entry Quiz/CEQ).
- What constitutes “attendance” in the course.
- The consequences of non-attendance.

Many departments have a two-week non-attendance policy, which states that a student is to be withdrawn from an online course if the student misses two consecutive weeks of work. If this is policy in a faculty member’s department, it needs to be clearly stated.

Approved -May 2023

Wake Technical Community College



Rubric: Attendance Policy (On Syllabus or included in the Getting Started/Course Information folder)	Met	Not Met
The attendance policy is clearly stated.		
The attendance policy includes the purpose of the Course Entry Quiz in determining entry into the course.		
The attendance policy includes what constitutes attendance in the course.		
The attendance policy includes the consequences of non-attendance.		

Instructions

General assignment and assessment instructions are provided, including how to submit assignments. Instructions are written clearly and with sufficient detail to ensure comprehension. Course instructions answer questions related to research, writing format, and technology needed to successfully complete the course. Links are included to plugins, required course software, publisher content, or other resources that provide the information needed in a particular course.

Examples include instructions for downloading and installing required software, accessing publisher content, submitting assignments, links to MLA/APA page formatting guidelines, etc.

Rubric: Instructions (On Syllabus or included in the Getting Started/Course Information folder)	Met	Not Met
General “how to” assignment instructions for submission are clearly written.		
Course instructions answer basic questions related to research, writing (format), and technology/software used.		
Links to plugins or required course software are provided when necessary.		
Any platform limitations are clearly stated as needed (i.e., OS or specific browser).		

Communication Expectations

The expectations for student interaction and participation are clearly articulated. Communication expectations, including netiquette or for online discussions, email, social media, and other forms of written interaction, are stated clearly.

Sample netiquette statement:

Please follow netiquette guidelines and be respectful and courteous in the discussion forums. Please refrain from threats, ad hominem attacks, and disrespectful tactics. Any posts deemed inappropriate by the course instructors will be deleted, and no credit will be awarded for the discussion forum.

Approved -May 2023



Rubric: Communication Expectations (On Syllabus or included in the Getting Started/Course Information folder)	Met	Not Met
The expectations for student interaction are clearly articulated.		
Communication expectations, including netiquette for online discussions, e-mail, social media, and other forms of written interaction, are stated clearly.		

Course Policies

Course and/or institutional policies with which the student is expected to comply are clearly stated, or a link to current policies is provided. Course policies can be posted either on the syllabus and/or as a separate item in the Getting Started/Course Information folder. Examples would include on-campus testing and/or synchronous communication requirements.

Rubric: Course Policies (On Syllabus or included in the Getting Started/Course Information folder)	Met	Not Met
Course policies with which the student is expected to comply are clearly stated or links are provided to the information.		

Student Support

The Student Support Optional link to Blackboard Assist should be located in the in the Getting Started/Course Information folder.

Rubric: Student Support	Met	Not Met
Optional student Support link is located in the Getting Started/Course Information folder		

Student Help Forum

The Student Help Forum is an area of the discussion board created specifically for participants to discuss course-related questions. This forum can have a customized title, such as Student Coffeehouse. A description of the forum's purpose should be provided within its description.

Approved -May 2023



Rubric: Student Help Forum	Met	Not Met
A Student Help Forum or similar resource is available on the course Discussions tab.		

Part C—Lessons

Introduction Assignment/Ice Breaker

Ice Breakers encourage positive rapport and build community within the course. The ice breaker can be customized to fit the course subject matter.

Clear directions are posted in Lesson/Week/Module/Unit 1 directing students to the Introductory Assignment/Icebreaker and detailing participation/collaboration requirements (for example, original post plus students are required to respond to at least 2 other classmates).

Rubric: Introduction Assignment/Ice Breaker	Met	Not Met
Introductory assignment is easy to locate.		
Clear instructions for the assignment including participation requirements are provided.		
The assignment is collaborative in nature and is designed to build rapport and/or a sense of community.		

Navigation

Navigation throughout the course is logical and efficient. Unused navigation elements have been removed.

Rubric: Navigation	Met	Not Met
Navigation between lessons is consistent, logical, and efficient.		
Unused navigation elements have been removed or hidden.		
All content can be accessed within 3-4 clicks.		

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) (posted in each Lesson/Week/Module/Unit)

SLOs are clearly stated and measurable. Instructional materials clearly align with course and lesson/week/module/unit SLOs. Instructional materials provide appropriate information and resources to allow students to achieve the SLOs.

- SLOs are measurable, clearly stated within each lesson/week/module/unit folder, and consistent with course-level SLOs.

Approved -May 2023



- Within each lesson/week/module/unit folder, SLOs are posted at the top and labelled appropriately. For example, Lesson Outcomes, Lesson Learning Outcomes, or Module Learning Outcomes.

Rubric: Student Learning Outcomes (posted in each Lesson/Week/Module/Unit)	Met	Not Met
SLOs for the lesson/week/module/unit are clearly stated.		
SLOs for the lesson/week/module/unit are measurable.		
SLOs are consistent with the course-level SLOs.		

Structure and Consistency

Content within lesson/week/module/unit is sequenced and structured in a consistent manner by employing lesson/week/module/unit folders or a similar format. Using learning modules or folders is recommended, as this structuring enables learners to readily access course material.

A form of “task list” is provided within each lesson/week/module/unit to guide a student through the course material and provide clear expectations.

Because students are more engaged when information is presented in short paragraphs, content is “chunked” into short paragraphs whenever possible. Content within each lesson/week/module/unit is organized and divided using titles, headings, subtitles, etc.

Font type, size, and color are consistent throughout the course.

Approved -May 2023

Wake Technical Community College



Rubric: Structure and Consistency	Met	Not Met
Content within lesson/week/module/unit is sequenced.		
A form of "task list" is provided within each lesson/week/module/unit.		
Content within lesson/week/module/unit is structured in a consistent manner. (i.e., use of organizational tools that allow students easy access to content).		
The course design and/or layout is consistent and easily orients students.		
Content within each lesson/week/module/unit is organized and divided using titles, headings, subtitles, etc.		
Font type, size, and color are consistent throughout the course.		

Expectations

All lesson/week/module/unit expectations and activities are clearly stated. Due dates are clearly stated in a prominent place (either on course calendar/schedule and/or in the lesson). This includes all readings, learning activities, and assessments within each lesson/week/module/unit.

Rubric: Expectations	Met	Not Met
All expectations and activities are clearly stated, including reading, learning activities, and assessments.		
Due dates for all assessments and activities are stated in a prominent place.		

Discussions

Course design should focus on building an online learning community, providing quick and consistent feedback, and establishing a strong faculty presence in an online course. Opportunities for interaction are available in the course, as appropriate.

Student Participation in collaborative activities should be explained, and if appropriate, a mechanism for measuring quality (for example, a rubric) should be provided. Consequences for failure to comply with stated participation requirements should be clearly defined. Evidence of student interaction should be observable in the course.

Approved -May 2023



Rubrics: Collaboration	Met	Not Met
Activities provide opportunities for faculty-student interaction when appropriate.		
Activities provide opportunities for student-student interaction when appropriate.		
Student participation in collaborative activities is defined, including consequences for non-compliance, and a mechanism for measuring quality and quantity is provided.		

Variety

If possible, based in the subject matter, learning activities use a variety of technology tools and teaching methods that attempt to facilitate communication, enhance learning, and interactively engage students.

Examples include, but are not limited to, wikis, journals, discussions, interactive content, videos, social media, lecture notes, presentations, external resources, simulations, and/or group work.

Rubric: Variety	Met	Not Met
Learning activities use a variety of technology tools and teaching methods.		
Activities provide opportunities for student-content interaction when appropriate.		

Assessments

Assessment review should focus on the alignment between Course SLOs, Lesson/Week/Module/Unit-level SLOs, and Assessments.

Student evaluation strategies are consistent with course-level student learning outcomes; the types of assessments used in the course logically complement course activities and resources. Assessments should be aligned with lesson/week/module/unit-level SLOs.

Assessments use multiple methods, both formative and summative, providing faculty with the flexibility to assess students in a variety of ways. Examples of assessments include (this list is not exhaustive):

- Quizzes/Tests/Exams
- Writing assignments
- Interactive exercises (discussions, journals, etc.)
- Projects
- Essays
- Surveys

Course includes adequate and appropriate methods and procedures to assess students' mastery of content.

Approved -May 2023



Assessment strategies and tools make the student continuously aware of his/her progress in class and mastery of the content.

Assessments used are suitable for a distance learning environment within LMS, proctored, or via third-party vendor.

Rubric: Assessments	Met	Not Met
The types of assessments in the course align with Course SLOs/ Lesson/Week/Module/Unit-level SLOs and complement course activities.		
Assessments are suitable for a distance-learning environment and effectively measure learning.		
Assessments and evaluations use multiple methods, where appropriate.		
Instructions for assessments, such as time limits, format, or submission guidelines are clearly stated.		

Rubrics/Grading Criteria

When used, rubrics should:

- Provide specific, descriptive, measurable criteria used to assess student work and participation; criteria should describe various levels of proficiency.
- Provide a breakdown of point structure/weighting of assignment requirements. The required length and format of the assignment for written work should be included.
- Be easy to locate.
- Relate criteria and point structure directly to the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and course grading policy.
- Be included for substantive, subjectively graded assignments (worth at least 5% of course grade).

Approved -May 2023



Rubric: Rubrics/Grading Criteria	Met	Not Met
Rubrics or grading criteria are provided for substantive, subjectively graded assignments (>5% individual or cumulative).		
Rubrics provide specific, descriptive criteria and a breakdown of point structure.		
Criteria relate directly to SLOs and course grading policy.		

Intellectual Property

Faculty members are to use copyrighted materials in accordance with federal copyright laws, fair use guidelines, and Wake Tech policy.

Faculty must obtain consent from the owner of copyrighted materials before using them in their courses, unless such content falls under the guidelines of **Fair Use**, the factors of which are indicated below:

- The purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes.
- The nature of the copyright work.
- The amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole.
- The effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.

All resources and materials used in the course are appropriately cited, with credit given to the owners of copyrighted materials.

Rubric: Intellectual Property	Met	Not Met
All resources and materials used in the course are appropriately cited (when necessary).		

Part D–Accessibility

Accessibility (ADA) Compliance

The course is designed to accommodate the use of assistive technologies, which facilitate readability and minimize distractions for those students using assistive technologies. Course design and content are in compliance with the Wake Tech Accessibility Checklist.

Accessible Documents and Content:

- Use Heading styles and other built-in structures like ordered and unordered lists.
- Use real text, not text within a graphic.

Approved -May 2023



- Use basic, simple, easy-to-read fonts. Examples are Georgia, Tahoma, Trebuchet MS, Arial, and Verdana.
- Avoid blinking or moving text.
- Enhance readability through choices of text size, font, and foreground and background colors.
- Provide a link to the plugin, when needed.

Rubric: Accessibility (ADA) Compliance - Accessible Documents and Content	Met	Not Met
Text-based course content uses heading styles and other built-in structures like ordered and unordered lists.		
All Word documents present in the course are accessible, including using an accessible heading structure and alt text for images.		
All Excel documents in the course are accessible.		
All PDF documents in the course are accessible.		
Font type, size, and color enhance readability throughout the course.		
Course content, including attached files, does not include text within a graphic (unless it is decorative) or blinking/moving text.		
A link to the plugin is provided when needed.		

Accessible File Names and Hyperlinks:

- File names use alphanumeric (abc, ABC, 123). The dash (-) instead of an underscore (_) is used.
- File names do NOT include spaces.
- File names do NOT include any special characters, such as: &, () % # \$ ¢ / \ { } [] < > ; : ; @
- File names do not exceed 31 characters.
- Link names are formatted for accessibility. For example, a file named *lecture1notes.docx* would have a link name of *Lecture 1 Notes (Word file)*.
- Weblinks convey: Where is the link going? Why is the link provided? What else happens when the link is clicked? An example is [Wake Tech eLearning Support \(opens in a new window\)](https://www.waketech.edu/student-services/online-learning) [Plain text URL: <https://www.waketech.edu/student-services/online-learning>].
- Weblinks that open in a new window are clearly marked as such.
- A plain text URL is provided for weblinks.
- Internet resources, including videos, can be navigated, or operated with keyboard shortcuts.

Approved -May 2023



Rubric: Accessibility (ADA) Compliance – Accessible File Names and Hyperlinks	Met	Not Met
All file/document names adhere to accessibility guidelines.		
All file/document links are formatted for accessibility.		
All hyperlinks are formatted for accessibility.		
Internet resources, including videos, can be navigated, or operated with keyboard shortcuts.		

Accessible Images, Charts, Graphs, and Diagrams:

- Alternative text (alt tags) is provided for ALL images, charts, graphs, and diagrams.
- The alternative text is meaningful to the context and replaces (not describing) the images, charts, graphs, or diagrams. It is succinct, generally between 5 and 15 words, or about 100 characters.
- A long description is included near images, charts, graphs, and diagrams that are more complex.
- Tables have a designated header row and include a title/caption. Verify the reading order using the tab key.
- The Title/Caption of the table can be repeated as the table’s alternative text. When the table contains more complex information or abbreviations, more explanation, in the form of a long description, is provided near the table.

Rubric: Accessibility (ADA) Compliance: Accessible Images, Charts, Graphs, and Diagrams	Met	Not Met
All images within the course have alt tags.		
A long description is included near images, charts, graphs, and diagrams that are more complex.		
All tables are formatted to adhere to accessibility guidelines.		

Accessible Video and Audio:

- Transcripts are provided for all linked and embedded audio files.
- Audio and/or video files are not set to auto start and do not loop.
- Linked and embedded multimedia clips and videos are captioned, and audio descriptions are included, when appropriate.

Rubric: Accessibility (ADA) Compliance: Accessible Video and Audio	Met	Not Met
All video content is closed-captioned.		

Approved -May 2023



Rubric: Accessibility (ADA) Compliance: Accessible Video and Audio	Met	Not Met
All audio content has transcripts provided.		
Linked and embedded multimedia clips and videos are captioned, and audio descriptions are included, when appropriate.		
Any other multimedia present in the course meets accessibility standards.		

PowerPoint Specific Accessibility:

- The slide show has been created using a built-in PowerPoint slide layout.
- Each slide has a unique title and uses an appropriate heading structure.
- All content in the slide show appears in the outline view of the show.
- The information appearing in the PowerPoint Selection Pane is in the same order as it appears on the slides.

Rubric: Accessibility (ADA) Compliance: PowerPoint	Met	Not Met
All PowerPoint documents in the course are accessible.		

Part E—Gradebook and Faculty Presence

Part E contains course components best assessed after the course has ended

Gradebook

Grades for all assignments should be included in the LMS gradebook or via a third-party vendor.

If faculty uses a third-party grading system, student grades from that platform should be linked with the Blackboard Gradebook when possible or a link provided to the students to access the third-party gradebook should be posted.

At any time, a student should be able to access an accurate weighted course grade (running total) from the LMS or via a third-party vendor without having to perform any calculations.

Rubric: Gradebook	Met	Not Met
Faculty adhere to stated and/or departmental grading expectations (e.g., 7 days after due date has passed).		
An accurate weighted grade is available for students to determine their course grade, without having to perform any calculations, which will allow them to keep up with their course progress. <i>The grade weighting or total points should match what is stated on the</i>		

Approved -May 2023



Rubric: Gradebook	Met	Not Met
<i>syllabus or in the Getting Started/Course Information folder. If a third-party grading system is used, students should be referred to the location that contains their current average in the course.</i>		
Unused rows and columns are hidden from student view or deleted.		

Faculty Presence

Regular faculty presence and responsiveness are evident throughout the course. Faculty provides weekly, meaningful, content-related feedback, either by way of individual or group feedback. Faculty may provide feedback via announcements for the class, participation on discussion forums, assignment feedback, etc.

Rubric: Faculty Presence	Met	Not Met
Regular faculty presence and responsiveness are evident throughout the course, achieved through announcements, participation on discussion forums, and/or detailed feedback on assessments, etc.		

Mechanics

Course has few to no errors, typos, or broken links to ensure it conveys a level of academic quality and professionalism; for example, course documents have been proofread for grammatical errors, links are operational, etc.

Rubric: Mechanics	Met	Not Met
The course grammar and mechanics do not negatively affect readability and expression of main ideas.		
The course does not contain broken links (i.e., files, websites, documents, SoftChalk content, videos, etc.).		

Approved -May 2023

Wake Technical Community College

