ONLINE COURSE ASSESSMENT TOOL (OCAT) AND PEER ASSESSMENT PROCESS
Cleveland State University

Purpose:

This tool and confidential peer assessment process is meant to provide faculty with constructive peer feedback on the design and instruction of online courses. Expected benefits are:
- Constructive feedback regarding teaching effectiveness
- Instructional improvement
- Faculty development
- Opportunities for peer support

Overview of tool:

- Process Data page
- There are seven sections
    - The first 5 sections relate to assessment of course design and teaching
    - The last 2 sections relate to summary narratives and instructor responses
- The first 5 sections relating to course & instructor assessment are:
    1. Course Overview & Organization
    2. Learner Objectives & Competencies
    3. Resources & Materials
    4. Learner Interaction
    5. Learner Assessment
- The last 2 sections consist of:
    6. Peer Assessor Commentary
    7. Instructor Response

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Modified January 2014 by University eLearning Committee.

Modified 2011: Cleveland State University eLearning Faculty Advisory Committee

OCAT PROCESS DATA

This course is Quality Matters approved: Yes_____   No_____
If Yes, year approved: _____

"The **Quality Matters (QM) Program** is a nationally recognized, faculty-centered, peer review process designed to certify the quality of online courses and online components. Colleges and universities across and beyond the U.S. use the tools in developing, maintaining and reviewing their online courses and in training their faculty" (https://www.qualitymatters.org/higher-education-program).

Is the faculty being reviewed, the course designer? Yes_____ No_____
If the faculty being reviewed **is not the course designer**, **do not answer** Part A in any of the following sections.

PROCESS DATA TO BE INCLUDED:

1.	Instructor being assessed (Name, Rank, Department)	
2.	Course being assessed (Course Code, Section, Term)	
3.	Peer Assessor (Name, Rank, Department)	
4.	Format (e.g. Blackboard CE, Blackboard Learn)	
5.	Number of students enrolled at time of assessment	
6.	Date of request to CFC	
7.	Date assessment begun	
8.	Date assessment completed	

Please note: If the course has received Quality Matters™ approval, the reviewer can skip the evaluation of the identified sections. However, each section related to Elements of Teaching is reviewed regardless of QM approval.

Pre-assessment questions, peer assessor to instructor:

(Completed by assessor)
1. What is the delivery method of this course: F2F, totally online, hybrid?
2. How many students are enrolled?
3. Is this an elective or core course?
4. Are any external tools used (e.g. WikiSpaces, Survey Monkey, Wimba, other online resource tools)? And, if so, are they linked from within the course?
5. Is this course part of a course of study (program)? If so, where in the course of study is it placed? And, if so, is the same student cohort "traveling" with this professor?
6. Is this course part of a fully online program? If so, have the students already had experience of online courses

within the online program?

7. Was there a separate orientation to the online course environment and course organization/navigation? Was this held online or F2F? Was an orientation done for other related student needs (e.g. library, IT services, Writing Center)?

8. Do you use e-mail as a substantial method of contacting or engaging your students throughout the online course?

_____

PERFORMANCE LEVELS:

Evident: Element apparent on review

Not evident: Element not apparent on review

Not Applicable: Not relevant to the course

	Evident	Not Evident	N/A
❑ **Course has been Quality Matters approved. Section review not needed.** ❑ **Course was designed by reviewee. If no, do not answer Part A.** **1. COURSE OVERVIEW & ORGANIZATION** **A. Elements of course design**			
1. Navigational instructions make the organization of the course easy to understand and are transparent at the beginning of course			
2. Course introduction that includes guidance on the structure of the course is provided			
3. Course design demonstrates user-friendly presentation style			
4. Minimum student technology competencies/skills for the course are stated, if applicable			
5. Course-specific technology requirements are stated, if applicable			
6. Course instructions articulate or link to a clear description of the technical support offered			
7. Description and method of accessing the institution's academic resources (e.g. library, Writing Center) is provided			
8. Description and method of accessing the institution's student support services and resources (e.g. student portal) is provided			
9. *Course design item(s) emerging from peer discussion not included in the list above* (type in box below).			

1. Course Overview & Organization - continued on next page…

1. **COURSE OVERVIEW & ORGANIZATION (continued)** **B. Elements of teaching**	Evident	Not Evident	N/A
The instructor:			
1. provides an introduction and includes credentials related to this course			
2. provides the opportunity for student introduction			
3. provides opportunity to practice and master the technologies needed for the course			
4. assures that learners are ready to undertake assigned tasks			
5. suggests amount of time expected to accomplish learning activities			
6. states the broader scholarly/practical context for learning objectives/goals			
7. *Instructional item(s) emerging from peer discussion not included in the list above* (type in box below)			
Comments:			

☐ Course has been Quality Matters approved. Section review not needed. ☐ Course was designed by reviewee. If no, do not answer Part A. **2. LEARNER OBJECTIVES & COMPETENCIES** **A. Elements of course design**	Evident	Not Evident	N/A
Learning objectives/goals:			
1. are stated for each unit/module			
2. are clear and easy to understand			
3. describe outcomes that are assessable			
4. address content mastery			
5. address critical thinking skills			
6. *Course design item(s) emerging from peer discussion not included in the list above* (type in box below).			
Comments:			

2. LEARNER OBJECTIVES & COMPETENCIES (continued) **B. Elements of teaching**	Evident	Not Evident	N/A
The instructor:			
1. provides information to students on how to meet the learning objectives/goals			
2. explains how to meet the learning objectives/goals in a manner that is clear and easy to understand			
3. fosters integration with prior learning			
4. *Instructional item(s) emerging from peer discussion not included in the list above* (type in box below)			
Comments:			

☐ **Course has been Quality Matters approved. Section review not needed.**
☐ **Course was designed by reviewee. If no, do not answer Part A.**

3. RESOURCES & MATERIALS A. Elements of course design	Evident	Not Evident	N/A
Resources/materials:			
1. address learning objectives/goals (e.g. course reference materials, glossaries, library resources, relevant web resources, discipline-specific resources)			
2. are appropriately authenticated and cited			
3. are current and/or timely			
4. are prepared by qualified sources			
5. are presented in a format appropriate to the online environment			
6. are easily accessible to the student			
7. state the purpose related to the course (e.g. core material, supplemental, historical, required/optional)			
8. have active links to non-institutional (external) electronic resources			
9. include the use of electronic library scholarly resources			
10. address diverse learning styles (e.g. multimedia, text chats, voice chats, animation, performance activities, simulations)			
11. address diverse learner readiness levels (e.g. remedial and/or enrichment materials)			
12. *Course design item(s) emerging from peer discussion not included in the list above* (type in box below).			
Comments:			

3. RESOURCES & MATERIALS (continued) B. Elements of teaching	Evident	Not Evident	N/A
The instructor:			
1. demonstrates knowledge of discipline			
2. incorporates strategies that promote the progressive learner construction of knowledge (e.g. use of unit/modules that are thematically connected and have a logical progression)			
3. provides opportunities for students to contribute to course resources			
4. *Instructional item(s) emerging from peer discussion not included in the list above* (type in box below)			
Comments:			

❑ Course has been Quality Matters approved. Section review not needed. ❑ Course was designed by reviewee. If no, do not answer Part A. **4. LEARNER INTERACTION** **A. Elements of course design**	Evident	Not Evident	N/A
1.	The course design prompts the instructor to be present, active, and engaged with the students (e.g. provide tools necessary)			
2.	Netiquette instructions/recommendations provided regarding emails & discussion postings			
3.	Guidelines for collaboration are defined			
4.	Guidelines for communication/accountability are defined			
5.	Guidelines for privacy are defined (e.g. instructors/students will not repurpose/redistribute student work or communications without permission)			
6.	*Course design item(s) emerging from peer discussion not included in the list above* (type in box below).			
	Comments:			

4. Learner Interaction - continued on next page…

4. **LEARNER INTERACTION (continued)** **B. Elements of teaching**	Evident	Not Evident	N/A
The instructor:			
1. is aware of student progress (e.g. assigned tasks) and any barriers to progression			
2. fosters interaction among constituencies inside and outside the course as appropriate (e.g. student-student, student-instructor, and with external persons or agencies)			
3. embeds learning activities (student-content interaction) that promote the achievement of stated objectives and learning outcomes.			
4. selects communication strategies to communicate appropriately with the class as a whole, student groups, and individuals			
5. promotes independent and/or shared student research, if applicable			
6. provides content-based interaction as needed			
7. provides timely responses to student queries			
8. offers announcements tailored to the progress of the class			
9. models a communication style that demonstrates a positive tone			
10. *Instructional item(s) emerging from peer discussion not included in the list above* (type in box below)			
Comments:			

☐ Course has been Quality Matters approved. Section review not needed. ☐ Course was designed by reviewee. If no, do not answer Part A. **5. LEARNER ASSESSMENT** **A. Elements of course design**	Evident	Not Evident	N/A
1. Assessments are frequent enough to provide formative feedback			
2. Rubrics are provided to define assessment criteria, if applicable			
3. Methods of submitting assignments are appropriate to the online learning environment			
4. *Course design item(s) emerging from peer discussion not included in the list above* (type in box below).			
Comments:			

5. LEARNER ASSESSMENT (continued) **B. Elements of teaching**	Evident	Not Evident	N/A
The instructor:			
1. clearly describes assignments (student discussion, participation, and projects)			
2. provides formative assessment/progress feedback (e.g. feedback that guides the student about academic performance before the end of the course)			
3. provides summative assessment feedback (e.g. substantive instructor feedback on academic performance)			
4. provides timely assessment feedback			
5. *Instructional item(s) emerging from peer discussion not included in the list above* (type in box below)			
Comments:			

6.   PEER ASSESSOR COMMENTARY:

1.	**Additional comments regarding the strengths of this course and teaching:** (type in box below)
2.	**Additional comments regarding recommendations for improvement:** (type in box below)

7.	**INSTRUCTOR RESPONSE:**

1.	**Instructor response to results of this assessment:** (type in box below)
2.	**Suggestions for revising the peer assessment process:** (type in box below)