

COULTER FACULTY CENTER eLEARNING FACULTY FELLOWS

ONLINE COURSE ASSESSMENT TOOL (OCAT) AND PEER ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Purpose:

The eLearning Faculty Fellows and staff of the Coulter Faculty Center (EL-FF CFC) have developed this tool and confidential peer assessment process 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

Steps for obtaining a peer assessment through the CFC:

1. Faculty request confidential peer assessment through the CFC
2. The CFC arranges the peer assessment with a trained peer assessor
3. Peer assessor meets with the course instructor before beginning the assessment(s)
4. Peer assessor completes sections 1 – 6
5. Peer assessor meets with instructor; section 7 is completed by instructor and any modifications of entries are finalized by assessor
6. The final completed document will be sent to the faculty member and also maintained in a confidential CFC file

* The peer assessment instrument itself will also be available for faculty use as a self-assessment faculty development tool.

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OCAT PROCESS DATA

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. WebCT-CE, WebCat-Vista, Other)	
5.	Number of students enrolled at time of assessment	
6.	Date of request to CFC	
7.	Date assessment begun	
8.	Date assessment completed	

Pre-assessment questions, peer assessor to instructor:

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. Centra, Ultimate Survey, Elluminate, 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

Assessor will address in post-interview and record in section commentary

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<u>1. COURSE OVERVIEW & ORGANIZATION</u>		Evident	Not Evident	N/A
<u>A. Elements of course design</u>				
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.	<i>Course design item(s) emerging from peer discussion not included in the list above (type in box below).</i>			

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

1. <u>COURSE OVERVIEW & ORGANIZATION (continued)</u>		Evident	Not Evident	N/A
B. <u>Elements of teaching</u>				
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.	<i>Instructional item(s) emerging from peer discussion not included in the list above (type in box below)</i>			

<u>2. LEARNER OBJECTIVES & COMPETENCIES</u>		Evident	Not Evident	N/A
<u>A. Elements of course design</u>				
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.	<i>Course design item(s) emerging from peer discussion not included in the list above (type in box below).</i>			

2. Learner Objectives & Competencies - continued on next page...

<u>2. LEARNER OBJECTIVES & COMPETENCIES (continued)</u>		Evident	Not Evident	N/A
<u>B. Elements of teaching</u>				
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.	<i>Instructional item(s) emerging from peer discussion not included in the list above (type in box below)</i>			

3. <u>RESOURCES & MATERIALS</u>		Evident	Not Evident	N/A
A. <u>Elements of course design</u>				
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.	<i>Course design item(s) emerging from peer discussion not included in the list above (type in box below).</i>			

3. Resources & Materials - continued on next page...

3. <u>RESOURCES & MATERIALS (continued)</u>		Evident	Not Evident	N/A
<u>B. Elements of teaching</u>				
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.	<i>Instructional item(s) emerging from peer discussion not included in the list above (type in box below)</i>			

<u>4. LEARNER INTERACTION</u>		Evident	Not Evident	N/A
<u>A. Elements of course design</u>				
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.	<i>Course design item(s) emerging from peer discussion not included in the list above (type in box below).</i>			

4. Learner Interaction - continued on next page...

4. LEARNER INTERACTION (continued)		Evident	Not Evident	N/A
B. Elements of teaching				
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.	<i>Instructional item(s) emerging from peer discussion not included in the list above (type in box below)</i>			

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5. <u>LEARNER ASSESSMENT</u>		Evident	Not Evident	N/A
A. <u>Elements of course design</u>				
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.	<i>Course design item(s) emerging from peer discussion not included in the list above (type in box below).</i>			

5. Learner Assessment - continued on next page...

5. <u>LEARNER ASSESSMENT (continued)</u>		Evident	Not Evident	N/A
B. <u>Elements of teaching</u>				
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.	<i>Instructional item(s) emerging from peer discussion not included in the list above (type in box below)</i>			

6. <u>PEER ASSESSOR COMMENTARY:</u>	
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. <u>INSTRUCTOR RESPONSE:</u>	
1.	Instructor response to results of this assessment: (type in box below)
2.	Suggestions for revising the peer assessment process: (type in box below)

Please take this opportunity to provide your valuable feedback on the OCAT!
Thank you for your time. The web address is below:

<http://paws.wcu.edu/rcrow/ocat.html>