

Online Course Facilitation Checklist

This Online Course Facilitation Checklist is meant to assist online course instructors with teaching and administering their online courses.

The items on this checklist have been constructed at the most basic level according to current instructional theory and research in online teaching, as well as guidelines currently used by other universities.

This checklist, along with supporting resources to assist faculty with implementing these guidelines, can be found at: <http://learnit.stfrancis.edu/teachonline/facilitationchecklist.htm>.

▶▶ General Guidelines for Instructor Participation:

1. Instructors should access course:
 - a. at least once each business day
 - b. at least once over the weekend
2. Instructors should respond to student questions:
 - a. within 24 - 48 hours; if unable to do so (e.g., during professional travel), the instructor is asked to give one week's notice to students
3. Instructors should demonstrate presence in the discussions by:
 - a. reading all new student discussion postings within 24-48 hours
 - b. responding to students individually or collectively within 24-48 hours
 - c. posting grades for graded discussions one week after the discussion closes
4. Instructor should provide individual feedback/grades for written assignments and quizzes:
 - a. one-two weeks after the assignment or quiz due date
5. Final course grades should be posted by the Registrar's deadline

▶ Before the class begins, the instructor . . .

Completed
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Managerial Tasks	
Reviews the syllabus to ensure that all information is updated, accurate, and presented clearly.	
Updates the syllabus with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor's <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name ○ Contact information ○ Virtual office hours ○ Preferred communication method 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expected responses from instructor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expected response time to students' messages/questions ○ Expected response time to assignments ○ Expected response time to discussion postings 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expected student responsibilities for discussion postings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Required number and expected quality of postings ○ Netiquette standards 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources available for technical assistance to help students feel comfortable with the technology: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learnit.stfrancis.edu (tutorial links and/or instructions on using the technology; ○ DAT phone support; ○ Help available within course 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Academic integrity ○ Disability ○ Student behavior 	
Reviews entire course and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirms that all course components (modules, assignments, discussions, quizzes) correspond to the syllabus 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corrects spelling or grammatical errors throughout the course content. (Contacts DAT if needed.) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates and reviews assessment due dates for accuracy. (Contacts DAT if needed.) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirms online grade book settings are accurate for total assessment. (Contacts DAT if needed.) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates hyperlinks to remove dead or broken links. (Contacts DAT if needed.) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checks all media for proper display (broken images, video playback, etc.) (Contacts DAT if needed.) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirms accuracy of calendar dates 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publishes the course so that it is available for students. 	

▶▶ During the first week, the instructor . . .

Completed
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Managerial Tasks	
Contacts missing students to encourage their participation.	
Social Tasks	
Uploads instructor photo to Canvas profile.	
Provides a personal and welcoming audio/video introduction to develop a personal presence.	
Designs a forum for students to post introductions and share experiences. Encourages students to share pictures or other representations (e.g., avatars) of themselves.	
Responds to each student's introduction.	
Models discussion response behavior and tone. Uses a conversational tone for responses that is inviting, personal, friendly, and encouraging.	
Uses humor sparingly and carefully; use emoticons to express jesting.	
Invites and encourages students to use virtual office hours and/or to make appointments.	
Adds a social forum for non-class related topics. (e.g., Internet Café)	
Pedagogical Tasks	
Guides students to the course syllabus.	
Creates a weekly audio/video message that summarizes the upcoming week's (module) content, activities and assignments.	
Communicates with students frequently to maintain a positive rapport (per the General Guidelines for Instructor Participation).	
Determines areas in which students need to improve and notifies students.	
Challenges the students by asking questions which apply to the readings and communicating high expectations.	
Technical Tasks	
Models competency with course management system delivery tools and uses tools appropriately.	
Makes reasonable accommodations due to technical difficulties beyond the students' control consistent with policies in the syllabus.	
Directs students to links and information on technical support (Learnit.stfrancis.edu, DAT Phone Support, Help Tickets)	

► Throughout the course, the facilitator . . .

Completed
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Managerial Tasks	
Continues to create a weekly (modular) audio/video message that summarizes the upcoming week's (module) content, activities and assignments.	
Updates the online grade book promptly after assignment due dates.	
Conducts course according to designated schedule in the syllabus with any deviations communicated students in advance.	
Enforces guidelines for learner behaviors such as netiquette and due dates.	
Reminds students of upcoming deadlines.	
Monitors attendance in class in order to follow up with missing students.	
Opens and closes course materials and activities to optimize student learning and avoid confusion.	
Announces absences to students with guidance on what to do during absence.	
Enters students' attendance data in the Portal by the end of the second week.	
Issues early warnings and mid-term warnings in the Portal at the times designated by the Registrar.	
Social Tasks	
Monitors discussions/social exchanges for respectfulness based on netiquette standards and University behavior policies.	
Immediately contacts students with inappropriate posts for explanation and clarification.	
Immediately makes disrespectful posts unavailable to the class at large.	
Blocks disruptive students from class activity if behavior continues to conflict with University policy.	
Uses announcements to keep class current and personal. Announcements may include holiday wishes and real world social issues (e.g. Katrina) as well as course information.	
Continues to maintain daily presence in discussion forums.	
Provides individual messages (email, postings, announcements) of encouragement.	
Pedagogical Tasks	
Instructions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continues to provide explanatory and supportive information (e.g., audio-visual aids, research articles, valid web resources) to facilitate mastery of course content. Uses illustrations and examples to clearly explain important concepts. Detects and corrects misconceptions. Utilizes specific teaching/learning strategies which promote self-directed learning. 	
Assignments/Discussions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focuses discussions on specific issues and uses discussion questions and problems to actively engage students in the learning process. Actively participates in discussions as stated in the syllabus (per the General Guidelines for Instructor Participation). Provides helpful, constructive suggestions to help students complete assignments. Assigns groups or creates a method for students to select groups before beginning group projects. Invites and encourages students to complete a peer review of individual and group projects. Summarizes discussion when it concludes. 	
Grading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completes grading of an assignment/project in a timely manner (per the General Guidelines for Instructor Participation). Implements rubrics established in course design. 	
Instructor Feedback: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responds to student questions promptly - consistent with timeline for feedback stated in syllabus (per the General Guidelines for Instructor Participation). 	

	Completed √
• Communicates clearly, as measured by responses from students.	
• Provides feedback indicating areas in which a student has succeeded as well as areas that require further development in a timely manner.	
• Directs students who have academic difficulty to appropriate assisting programs/centers in the university.	
• Contacts the student if his/her work is suspected of violating academic integrity for a discussion; if necessary, follows the university policy to handle the issue.	
Learning Community:	
• Creates opportunities for students to reflect upon and monitor/regulate their self-learning.	
• Encourages cooperative learning among students (e.g., student tutoring, study groups, group projects/discussions, etc.).	
Technical Tasks	
Makes reasonable accommodations due to technical difficulties beyond the students' control consistent with policies in the syllabus.	
Models competency with course management system delivery tools and uses tools appropriately.	
Directs students to links and information on technical support (Learnit.stfrancis.edu, DAT Phone Support, Help Tickets)	

▶ During the last week, the facilitator . . .

	Completed √
Managerial Tasks	
Posts final grades by the dates designated by the Registrar.	
Encourages students to complete course evaluation.	
Social Tasks	
Sends a closing personal message to students.	
Encourages students to share their class experience and say good bye in a closing forum.	
Pedagogical Tasks	
Provides feedback on final project and final grades.	

Originally Compiled by the Learning Management System Task Force
July 25, 2012

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Notes

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