

Introduction to Instructor Sample Course

Here at [Distance and Online Education](#) (DOE), we strive to increase access to the University of Iowa beyond the physical borders of campus. In partnership with university colleges and departments, we provide high quality academic courses to both traditional and nontraditional students using a variety of locations, schedules and technologies.

In addition, DOE provides resources, such as this Course Sample for Online Instructors, to allow faculty to explore new online teaching strategies and course redesign benefiting both on- and off-campus students.

We encourage you to browse this Sample Course to find data-driven best practices that can guide your own online course design!

USING THE ICON COURSE



Explore

Use [Modules](#) to examine the sample course.



Review

Use [Quick Guides](#) to learn about strategies used in the course.

GOALS

1. Provide instructors a sample online course that employs best practices including
 - a) Support from 5 data-driven strategies,
 - b) Alignment with Quality Matters (QM) standards, and
 - c) Student-centered design reflecting the data gathered from online students here at the University of Iowa.
2. Model best practices and including when, where, and how to effectively implement.
3. Connect instructors with Distance and Online Learning (DOE) to provide additional resources and support for online course development.

FORMAT

1. Provide a landing page with a course tour video and tips on how to use the course.
2. Create an introduction module which provides the course goals and format.
3. Develop specific content modules that include
 - a) "Quick Guides" to module design, and
 - b) Sample pages implementing best practices and strategies.

You will find Module 1 and Module 2 provide the same "Quick Guide" information. The module structure is intentionally duplicated to provide a cohesive and comprehensive learning environment. This format requires

less cognitive load from the student to be directed to the online structure, allowing students to focus cognitive load towards the course content.

5 DATA-DRIVEN STRATEGIES

This instructor sample site is focused on using the 5 research-driven strategies detailed below.



Alignment

Align objectives, assessments, and instructional methodologies to create an effective course.



Cognitive Load

Establish appropriate cognitive load to increase transfer and retention of knowledge.



Engagement

Develop a learning environment engaging students with content, instructor, and peers.



Instructor Presence

Provide a safe sense of community to instruct, guide, encourage, and support student learning.



Motivation

Provide relevance, timely feedback, and social interaction to increase intrinsic motivation.

QUALITY MATTERS (QM) STANDARDS

Each Module in the Sample Course meets QM Standards. Read through the QM information below and refer back to the QM Standards Rubric embedded below as needed.

The QM Commitment

Quality Matters is a leader in providing quality assurance goals and standards for online learning.

QM's Mission

Promote and improve the quality of online education and student learning nationally and internationally through:

- Development of current, research-supported, and practice-based quality standards and appropriate evaluation tools and procedures.
- Recognition of expertise in online education quality assurance and evaluation.
- Fostering a culture of continuous improvement by integrating QM standards and processes into organizational plans to improve the quality of online education.
- Providing professional development in the use of rubrics, tools and practices to improve the quality of online education.
- Peer review and certification of quality in online education.

[QM Website Homepage](#)

[QM Standards](#)

DOE: ONLINE LEARNING RESEARCH

At the University of Iowa, Distance and Online Learning (DOE) conducted research regarding students' preferences for online learning. One of the goals was to gather data to develop stronger, user-center design for our online course templates. The results of the study are shared within this guide.

62% of students surveyed stated having the ability to take online courses was important to their learning needs.