



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES
ONLINE EDUCATION
INITIATIVE

COURSE DESIGN RUBRIC



Santa Ana College
Adoption

The Online Education Initiative (OEI) is a collaborative effort among California Community Colleges (CCCs) to ensure that significantly more students are able to complete their educational goals by increasing both access to and success in **high quality online courses**.



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Revisions approved by the Online Education Initiative Steering Committee December 9, 2016.

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The OEI Course Design Rubric was developed in 2014 by the OEI Professional Development work group to assure that all courses offered as part of the initiative promote student success and meet existing regulatory and accreditation requirements. It has undergone three major revisions since then, including the current iteration, in response to changes in available instructional technology and feedback from both instructors and reviewers.

For a course to be offered to students in the CCC Course Exchange, it must first go through a course review process that ensures alignment with the OEI Course Design Rubric. The Rubric is divided into five sections.



Additional SAC Requirements are indicated within each section.

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In addition to preparing courses for the CCC Course Exchange, the OEI Course Design Rubric is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License and can be used as:

- A roadmap for instructors designing new online courses.
- A tool for instructors seeking to update or improve existing courses.
- The foundation for starting a local POCR (Peer Online Course Review) Club.

Visit ccconlineed.org for more information on the OEI, the Rubric, and the Course Review Process. We welcome your feedback and suggestions

SECTIONS A-C

Section A: Content Presentation

The 13 elements for quality course design in this section address how content is organized and accessed in the course management system. Key elements include course navigation, learning objectives, and access to student support information.

Section B: Interaction

The 8 elements in this section address instructor initiated and student initiated communication. Key elements of quality course design covered in this section include regular effective contact, student-to-student collaboration, and communication activities that build a sense of community among online learners.

Section C: Assessment

The 8 elements in this section address the variety and effectiveness of assessments within the course. Key elements include the alignment of objectives and assessments, the clarity of instructions for completing assessments, and evidence of timely and regular feedback.

Following a review by a team of trained faculty peer reviewers, each element in Sections A-C will be marked in one of three ways:

Incomplete:

The element is missing or present to a degree that does not adequately support student success in online learning.

Aligned:

The element is present and effectively designed to support student success in online learning.

Additional Exemplary Elements:

This designation recognizes design choices that further enhance the student experience in the online learning environment.

Review Results

If any element in Section A-C is Incomplete, the instructor will receive on-going support from a dedicated Course Design Specialist to bring the element(s) into alignment with the rubric.



Any incomplete elements will be discussed with suggestions and support to enable rubric alignment.

Section D and E will be spot checked for rubric alignment.

SECTION D

Accessibility

The 23 elements in this section are reviewed to determine if a student using assistive technologies will be able to access course content as required by Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (also known as “508 Compliance”).

Since Section D addresses elements that are required by law to be present, the elements in this section can only be marked as **Incomplete or Aligned**.

Review Results

If any element in Section D is Incomplete, the instructor will receive on-going support from a dedicated Course Design Specialist or an Accessibility Expert to bring the element(s) into alignment with the rubric.

SECTION E

Institutional Accessibility Concerns

The 4 elements in this section cover accessibility of external tools and third-party content. While the accessibility elements in Section D are primarily under the control of faculty when developing a course, the elements in Section E may be outside the purview of the instructor which would require additional consideration or intervention at the institutional level.

Review Results

If a course is aligned in all Sections except E, the OEI Chief Professional Development Officer and the Director of Accessibility will look at the specific accessibility issue(s) and work with the instructor on a plan for making the course accessible.

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Section A: Content Presentation



Unit level objectives should reside in the “Module Introduction” page. Course objectives are listed in the Canvas “Syllabus” page and instructor course syllabus. SAC Canvas template is used, additional menu items are hidden, and course banner is updated if used.

Incomplete	Aligned	Additional Exemplary Elements
A1: Placement of Unit-level Objectives		
<input type="checkbox"/> Objectives are not included in individual learning units/modules.	<input type="checkbox"/> Objectives are included in the individual learning units/modules.	<input type="checkbox"/> Objectives are included in assessments.
A2: Clarity of Unit-level Objectives		
<input type="checkbox"/> Objectives do not include demonstrable learning outcomes.	<input type="checkbox"/> Objectives include demonstrable learning outcomes.	<input type="checkbox"/> Objectives are written in language that is student centered.
A3: Alignment of Unit-level Objectives		
<input type="checkbox"/> Unit content and activities are not aligned with unit objectives.	<input type="checkbox"/> Unit content and activities are aligned with unit objectives.	<input type="checkbox"/> The connection between the content/activities and the unit objectives are made explicitly clear to the students.

Criteria A1 – A3 Comments:

Section A: Content Presentation



The "Course Information" module contains your navigation video, or at minimum, the template "Canvas Course Tour". Modules include template Introduction and Summary pages.

Incomplete	Aligned	Additional Exemplary Elements
A4: Course Navigation		
<input type="checkbox"/> Navigation and content flow are not easily determined.	<input type="checkbox"/> Navigation and content flow are easily determined by the user.	<input type="checkbox"/> Clearly labeled tutorial materials that explain how to navigate the specific course are included.
A5: Unit-level Chunking		
<input type="checkbox"/> Content is not presented in visibly distinct learning units or modules.	<input type="checkbox"/> Content is presented in visibly distinct learning units or modules.	<input type="checkbox"/> Learning units or modules are consistently structured and sequenced allowing students to better anticipate and manage their workload.
A6: Page-level Chunking		
<input type="checkbox"/> Page content is not chunked in manageable segments using headings; long pages of text make online reading difficult.	<input type="checkbox"/> Page content is chunked in manageable segments using headings that facilitate online reading.	<input type="checkbox"/> Page content uses descriptive headings and subheadings that enhance student understanding of the material.

Criteria A4 – A6 Comments:

Section A: Content Presentation



Assure Publisher tools are integrated and working with clear explanations for access. At least two active learner engagement strategies are used. Multimedia tools are used.

Best practice: Instructor videos are used in each module for items such as: unit introduction, explanation of difficult concepts, or instructions.

Incomplete	Aligned	Additional Exemplary Elements
A7: Effective Use of CMS Tools		
<input type="checkbox"/> CMS tools that could reduce the labor intensity of learning are not used effectively.	<input type="checkbox"/> Course Management System (CMS) tools are used to reduce the labor-intensity of learning in a way that streamlines access to materials and activities for students.	<input type="checkbox"/> CMS Tools are used to provide integrated and innovative learning materials and activities for students.
A8: Student Centered Teaching		
<input type="checkbox"/> Content is presented using only one modality.	<input type="checkbox"/> A variety of modalities, such as text, audio, video, images and/or graphics are used to create student-centered learning.	<input type="checkbox"/> Technology is used creatively to emphasize student-centered learning throughout the course.
A9: Instructions		
<input type="checkbox"/> Instructions for working with course content is incomplete, or non-existent.	<input type="checkbox"/> Course design includes instructions for learners to work with content in meaningful ways (e.g. instructing students to take notes during a video, explaining the purpose of an external resource).	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructions are directly embedded with the content or activity.
A10: Individualized Learning		
<input type="checkbox"/> There are few or no individualized learning opportunities, such as remedial activities or resources for advanced learning.	<input type="checkbox"/> Individualized learning opportunities, such as remedial activities or resources for advanced learning, are provided.	<input type="checkbox"/> Numerous individualized learning opportunities are provided throughout the course.

Criteria A7 – A10 Comments:

Section A: Content Presentation



Mid-stream and end of course surveys is evidenced. Policies regarding academic honesty, required interaction/participation, drop/no-show, accommodations and instructor communication and contact should be available in the course syllabus. The SAC Resources module should be available with the DSPS and academic honesty college policies intact.

Incomplete	Aligned	Additional Exemplary Elements
<p>A11: Learner Feedback</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Learners do not have an opportunity to give anonymous feedback to the instructor regarding course design and/or course content.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Learners have the opportunity to give anonymous feedback to the instructor regarding course design and/or course content after course completion.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> There are opportunities to give anonymous feedback both during course delivery and after course completion.</p>
<p>A12: Institutional Policies</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Institutional policies relevant for learner success are not included or are difficult to find.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Institutional policies relevant for learner success (e.g., plagiarism, academic honesty, technical support, and DSPS) are included and easy to find.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Institutional policies are provided in units or activities where they are most relevant.</p>
<p>A13: Student Services</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Links to institutional services are not included, thus requiring students to exit the course management system to find links for support.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Links to institutional services, including the DSPS office and the library, are embedded in the course and clearly labeled.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Links to institutional services are provided in units or activities when they may be needed most.</p>

Criteria A11 – A13 Comments:

Section B: Interaction



Welcome Announcement/Email is evident. “Instructor Contact” page and syllabus has clearly stated communication methods and preferred method. General Questions discussion board is used and referred to in syllabus and means of contact for questions. Instructor image is used in Canvas Settings.

Incomplete	Aligned	Additional Exemplary Elements
B1: Pre-Course Contact		
<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor does not initiate contact prior to or at the beginning of the course.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor initiates contact prior to or at the beginning of course.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructor provides multiple resources to help students successfully start the course.
B2: Instructor Initiated Contact		
<input type="checkbox"/> The plan for communication is unclear or missing.	<input type="checkbox"/> The instructor provides students with his/her plan to engage in regular effective contact using CMS communication tools that includes expected time frames for responses to inquiries, discussion board posts, and feedback on assignments and assessments.	<input type="checkbox"/> The instructor's plan to engage in regular effective contact includes the use of a wide variety of communication tools.
B3: Technology Support		
<input type="checkbox"/> The instructor's role for supporting course technology is not explained to the students.	<input type="checkbox"/> The instructor's role for supporting course technology is explained to students, and links to technology support are provided.	<input type="checkbox"/> Links to technology support are provided where needed throughout the course.
B4: Instructor Contact Info		
<input type="checkbox"/> Contact information for the instructor is missing or not easy to find.	<input type="checkbox"/> Contact information for the instructor is easy to find and includes expected response times.	<input type="checkbox"/> Students can choose from a variety of tools to contact the instructor.

Criteria B1 – B4 Comments:

Section B: Interaction



Regular Effective Contact is required and assessed on a weekly basis. Tools such as discussion board, journals, wikis and group work are evidenced. Community building activities are evident.

Incomplete	Aligned	Additional Exemplary Elements
B5: Student Initiated Interaction		
<input type="checkbox"/> Students are not given opportunities to initiate interaction.	<input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities for student-initiated interaction with other students and the instructor are clearly available and encouraged.	<input type="checkbox"/> Student-initiated interaction contributes to a student-centered learning environment.
B6: Student-to-Student Interaction		
<input type="checkbox"/> Student-to-student interaction may be present but is not a required part of the course.	<input type="checkbox"/> Student-to-student interaction that reinforces course content and learning outcomes is required as part of the course.	<input type="checkbox"/> Student-to-Student collaboration is designed to build workplace skills such as teamwork, cooperation, negotiation, and consensus-building.
B7: Learning Community		
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication activities that help build a sense of community among learners are not included.	<input type="checkbox"/> The course includes communication activities that are designed to build a sense of community among learners.	<input type="checkbox"/> The design and facilitation of communication activities are responsive to the variety of cultures and communication styles in the learning community.
B8: Participation Levels		
<input type="checkbox"/> Guidelines explaining required levels of student participation are not provided.	<input type="checkbox"/> Guidelines explaining required levels of student participation (i.e., quantity and quality of interactions) are provided.	<input type="checkbox"/> A rubric or equivalent grading document is included to explain how participation will be evaluated.

Criteria B5 – B8 Comments:

Section C: Assessment



Multiple types of low-stakes assessments are evidenced.

Incomplete	Aligned	Additional Exemplary Elements
<p>C1: Authenticity</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> There is little or no evidence of authenticity built into assessments.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Assessment activities lead to the demonstration of learning outcomes.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Assessments are designed to mimic authentic environments to facilitate transfer.</p>
<p>C2: Validity</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Students are evaluated on performance unrelated to the stated objectives.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Assessments appear to align with the objectives.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Assessments match the objectives and learners are directed to the appropriate objective(s) for each assessment.</p>
<p>C3: Variety</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Assessment types are limited to only one type of assessment (either formative or summative).</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Both formative and summative assessments are used.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Multiple types of formative and summative assessments are used (research project, objective test, discussions, etc.).</p>
<p>C4: Frequency</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Assessments are few and infrequent.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Multiple assessments are administered during the duration of the course.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Frequent assessments occur at regular intervals throughout the course, providing students with timely feedback on learning and performance.</p>

Criteria C1 – C4 Comments:

Section C: Assessment



Rubrics are implemented for all assessments including required effective student-to-student contact. Objective tests are an exception for which rubrics are not required.

Incomplete	Aligned	Additional Exemplary Elements
C5: Rubrics/Scoring Guide		
<input type="checkbox"/> Rubrics or descriptive criteria for desired outcomes may not be included for some assessment activities.	<input type="checkbox"/> Rubrics or descriptive criteria for desired outcomes are included.	<input type="checkbox"/> Rubrics and/or descriptive criteria for desired outcomes include models of “good work.”
C6: Assessment Instructions		
<input type="checkbox"/> Assessments include little or no instruction.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructions clearly explain to students how to successfully complete the assessments.	<input type="checkbox"/> Instructions are written clearly and with exemplary detail to ensure understanding.
C7: Feedback		
<input type="checkbox"/> There is little to no evidence of meaningful feedback on student assessments.	<input type="checkbox"/> The course includes a clear plan for providing meaningful, timely feedback on assessments.	<input type="checkbox"/> Students are given clear instructions on accessing feedback in the CMS and guidance on applying feedback to improve learning and performance.
C8: Self-Assessment		
<input type="checkbox"/> There is little to no evidence that students are provided opportunities for self-assessment	<input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities for student self-assessment with feedback are present.	<input type="checkbox"/> There are multiple opportunities for student self-assessment that encourage students to seek timely additional help.

Criteria C5 – C8 Comments:

Section D: Accessibility – Content Pages

Incomplete	Aligned	N/A
<p>D1: Heading Styles</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Content Pages do not use heading styles or use them inconsistently, including skipping heading levels, and/or altered fonts/size/format/color are used instead of heading styles.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Content Pages consistently use heading styles (i.e. Heading 2, Heading 3, etc.).</p>		
<p>D2: Lists</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Numbers, letters, or symbols are manually inserted to create a list.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Lists are created using the Bullet or Numbered List tool in the rich text editor.</p>		
<p>D3: Links</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Links are not descriptive, or URLs are displayed instead of meaningful links; and/or underlining is used for emphasis or for denoting headings.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Links are descriptive, and avoid redundancy; links avoid using non-descriptive phrases; and underlining is only used to denote active hyperlinks.</p>		
<p>D4: Tables</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Tables do not use designated header cells.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Table cells designated as row and/or column headers allow screen readers to read table cells in the correct order.</p>		
<p>D5: Color Contrast</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient color contrast between foreground (text or graphics) and the background could create difficulties for low vision and color blind students.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> There is sufficient color contrast between foreground and background to meet Section 508 standards.</p>		
<p>D6: Color and meaning</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Visual elements alone have been used to convey meaning.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Visual elements (color, bolding, all caps) are not used as the sole way to convey importance or meaning.</p>		
<p>D7: Images</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does not consistently use descriptive alternative text, or the image has text that is not part of the alternative description, or uses "image of" or "picture of" as part of the alt text.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Every image (including those used in Pages, Discussions, Quizzes and Assignments) uses descriptive alternative text that includes any text visible in the image, does not contain "image of" or "picture of", and uses "" if the image is purely decorative.</p>		



Pages will be spot checked for accessibility items. Accessibility is the responsibility of the faculty member. If you would like for DSPE to review your course please contact Distance Education.

Content Pages (Criteria D1 – D7) Comments:

Section D: Accessibility – Files

Incomplete	Aligned	N/A
<p>D8: Heading Styles</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Documents do not use heading styles or use them inconsistently, including skipping heading levels, and/or altered fonts/size/format/color are used instead of heading styles.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Documents consistently use heading styles (i.e. Heading 2, Heading 3, etc.).</p>		
<p>D9: Lists</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Numbers, letters, or symbols are manually inserted to create a list.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Lists are created using the Bullet or Numbered List tool.</p>		
<p>D10: Links</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Links are not descriptive, or URLs are displayed instead of meaningful links; and/or underlining is used for emphasis or for denoting headings.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Links are descriptive, and avoid redundancy; links avoid using non-descriptive phrases; and underlining is only used to denote active hyperlinks.</p>		
<p>D11: Tables</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Tables do not use designated header cells.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Table cells designated as row and/or column headers allow screen readers to read table cells in the correct order.</p>		
<p>D12: Color Contrast</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient color contrast between foreground (text or graphics) and the background could create difficulties for low vision and color blind students.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> There is sufficient color contrast between foreground and background to meet Section 508 standards.</p>		
<p>D13: Color and meaning</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Visual elements alone have been used to convey meaning.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Visual elements (color, bolding, all caps) are not used as the sole way to convey importance or meaning.</p>		
<p>D14: Images</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Does not consistently use descriptive alternative text, or the image has text that is not part of the alternative description, or uses "image of" or "picture of" as part of the alt text.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Every image uses descriptive alternative text that includes any text visible in the image, doesn't contain "image of" or "picture of", and uses "" if the image is purely decorative.</p>		



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Section D: Accessibility – Files continued

Incomplete	Aligned	N/A
<p>D15: Digital Reading Order</p>		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Reading order is not correctly set so that content is presented in the proper sequence to screen readers and other assistive technologies.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Reading order is correctly set so that content is presented in the proper sequence to screen readers and other assistive technologies.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>D16: Digital Presentations</p>		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Some slides have identical titles, reading order is not properly set (slides have had elements added to the layout), and/or images/charts do not include alternative text. Some text visible in slides is not visible in Outline View.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Every slide has a unique title, reading order is properly set (slides use pre-set layouts), and all images/charts include alternative text. All text is visible in Outline View so that it can be read by assistive technology.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>D17: PDFs</p>		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> PDFs contain accessibility issues and do not pass the Adobe Accessibility Check.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> PDFs pass the Adobe Accessibility Check with no substantial errors.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>D18: Spreadsheets</p>		
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Spreadsheets lack labels and supplemental explanations that would allow a student with visual or motor impairment to make use of the content using assistive technologies.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Spreadsheets include labels for the rows and columns, detailed labels for any charts, and is accompanied by a textual description of the spreadsheet, drawing attention to key cells, trends, and totals.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>

Criteria D8 – D18 comments on following page.

Files (Criteria D8 – D18) Comments:

Section D: Accessibility – Multimedia

Incomplete	Aligned	N/A
D19: Audio and Video		
<input type="checkbox"/> Accurate transcripts are not included for audio and/or closed captioning for video is not present.	<input type="checkbox"/> Accurate transcripts are included for audio, closed captioning for video, and narrative descriptions are available when possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>
D20: Live Broadcast		
<input type="checkbox"/> Live broadcasts do not have synchronized captions.	<input type="checkbox"/> Live broadcasts include a means for displaying synchronized captions.	<input type="checkbox"/>
D21: Auto-Play		
<input type="checkbox"/> Multimedia is set to auto-play.	<input type="checkbox"/> Multimedia is not set to auto-play.	<input type="checkbox"/>
D22: Flashing Content		
<input type="checkbox"/> Contains blinking or strobing multimedia.	<input type="checkbox"/> Multimedia (including gifs and images) do not blink or strobe.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section D: Accessibility – Accommodation

Incomplete	Aligned	N/A
D23: Instructional Materials Inventory		
<input type="checkbox"/> Inherently inaccessible learning objects are present, and an instructional material inventory and plan for accommodation has not been provided.	<input type="checkbox"/> An Instructional Material Inventory of each inherently inaccessible learning object is provided with a plan that has been reviewed and approved by the DSPS office for accommodating students with disabilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Instructional material inventory form available at: <http://bit.ly/material-inventory>

Criteria D19 – D23 comments on following page.

Multimedia (Criteria D19 – D22) & Accommodation (D23) Comments:

Section E: Institutional Accessibility Concerns

Incomplete*	Aligned	N/A
E1: LTI/Apps		
<input type="checkbox"/> LTI or Apps used in the course have not been verified as accessible.	<input type="checkbox"/> Any LTI or Apps used in the course have been verified as accessible.	<input type="checkbox"/>
E2: Media Players		
<input type="checkbox"/> Third-party media players used in the course have not been verified as accessible.	<input type="checkbox"/> Any third-party media players used in the course have been verified as accessible.	<input type="checkbox"/>
E3: Websites		
<input type="checkbox"/> Third-party websites used in the course have not been verified as accessible.	<input type="checkbox"/> Any third-party websites used in the course have been verified as accessible.	<input type="checkbox"/>
E4: Publisher Content		
<input type="checkbox"/> Publisher content used in the course has not been verified as accessible.	<input type="checkbox"/> Any publisher content used in the course has been verified as accessible.	<input type="checkbox"/>

* A determination of incomplete may result in an additional level of review for OEI Exchange courses.



Pages will be spot checked for accessibility items. Accessibility is the responsibility of the faculty member. If you would like for DSPE to review your course please contact Distance Education. Only SAC supported and approved applications should be used due to FERPA compliance and support purposes. Any questions, please contact the Distance Education office.

Criteria E1 – E4 Comments:



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