

# Course Syllabus

Whether you are establishing quality standards for a single course or an entire program, this course is for you. We will explore quality standards as they relate to both program and course design from an administrator's perspective.

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## Course Description

This course runs seven (7) weeks, including an online orientation and six content modules. You will probably spend a minimum of 8 - 12 hours a week working on the course itself; however, the time commitment will vary depending on your input, needs, and personal study habits. Participants are required to log on to the course a minimum of 4 times a week, but as discussions develop, you will probably log on more often (5-6 days a week).

### Topics to be Covered

- **Orientation** that allows participants to introduce themselves to each other.
- **Accreditation** as it relates to distance education.
- **Institutional Policies** as they relate to quality assurance.
- **Program Development** as it relates to quality assurance.
- **Course Development** as it relates to quality assurance.
- **Instruction** as it relates to quality assurance.
- **Academic Services** as it relates to quality assurance.
- **Evaluation & Assessment** as it relates to quality assurance. This topic is interwoven into the other topics as it relates to all matters of quality assurance.

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## Technical Support

For technical support, please contact me using my provided contact information or the MVCR office by sending an e-mail [mvcr-support@uillinois.edu](mailto:mvcr-support@uillinois.edu) or calling (217) 333-4393.

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## Goals & Objectives

### Course Goals

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the accreditation process and how it relates to quality

assurance within distance education initiatives.

- Examine institutional, departmental, and course policies and procedures for developing a quality online program.
- Discuss academic and technical support services for students and faculty and their relationship to quality online programming.
- Identify the components of a quality course from a design perspective.
- Outline desired competencies quality online instructor and processes for hiring, training, and developing such faculty.

## Course Objectives

During the course of the class, students will:

- Develop a list of components that contribute to quality programming, course design, and online instruction.
- Review Accreditation Standards as they relate to distance education.
- Analyze two quality course design rubrics and discuss the benefits and challenges of implementing these tools in the design process.
- Develop a comprehensive policy manual with procedures on how to evaluate the quality of each policy.
- Participate in class and small group discussions as a way of articulate understanding of course content and gaining insight from one another.
- Complete module activities directly relating to the final project: a proposal for implementing a new support or development module.
- Attend synchronous meetings as a means for interacting with one another, the instructor, and guests (2 Required Meetings).

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## Required Textbook

This course has a required textbook. Additional readings will be provided as links inside the course.

- Shelton, K. & Saltsman, G. (2005). *An administrator's guide to online education*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.  
Purchase Now: [Amazon](#) | [Barnes & Noble](#) | [Information Age Publishing](#)

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## Course Structure

The course is structured as a simulation. Participants take on the role of staff recruited to create an distance education initiative within a community college setting.

The course has a modular structure, which is consistent and predictable. Our course has a straightforward design and is easily navigable. Instructions and due dates for activities and assignments are clearly articulated so students know what is expected of them and can easily stay on track. Due dates of weekly assignments are staggered throughout the week (see the course calendar) in order to give participants time to read and comment on their

classmates' work before the next module begins. The course design is based on principles of collaborative learning and active participation, as well as sharing of thoughts and problem solving. I also realize that participants have lives beyond the scope of this course and since professional adults often have more free time on weekends, I have also taken that into consideration. However, participants unable to complete an assignment by the scheduled deadline should notify the instructor prior to the assignment's due date. Better yet, prepare the assignment early and post it. This will give classmates a head start in reading and responding to your work. See the course calendar to get an overview of when assignments are due.

For each course module, participants will be presented with a brief, text-based lecture (in the form of a memo from the director) along with hyperlinks to additional articles and resources. Participants will engage in guided discussions about these topics via the asynchronous discussion forums. Discussions will be prompted by "advanced organizer" questions inviting participants to consider the topic as it relates to quality.

Assigned readings and responses to discussion questions should take place during the Module in which they are assigned in order to get the most benefit from the discussions. Instructions and due dates for activities and assignments are clearly articulated so participants know what is expected of them and can easily stay on track.

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## Course Requirements

The following activities and requirements apply to this course:

- Read the lesson introductions and other assigned reading materials.
- Answer weekly discussion questions related to the assigned readings.
- Engage in positive and meaningful dialogue with classmates concerning the course subject matter.
- Complete weekly assignments.
- Submit a summary of the key items covered each week.
- Meet synchronously with the instructor twice. The first synchronous meeting must be before the end of week 2, and the second meeting must be between weeks four and six. There are a few ways of fulfilling this requirement. You can either attend one of the previously scheduled virtual office hours or you can make an individual appointment at a time that is mutually agreed upon.

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## Course Communication

### News

The News Forum, linked under the Communication Center module on our course's home page, serves as a way for me to make announcements within our virtual learning environment. All students are automatically subscribed to this forum and will receive a duplicate e-mail of each message posted within it.

### Discussion Forum

The discussion forum is the heart of our online course. It is where you will

submit many of your assignments, and where you will discuss your work with your classmates. Other than the discussion forum setup for group assignments, all forums are public. Therefore, whatever is posted can be seen by everyone in the course. If you want to send a private message, use e-mail.

## **Chat**

For synchronous discussions among multiple class members, you can use the synchronous Chat tool. You can get to the Chat tool at any time by clicking on the Water Cooler link under the Communication Center section of our Course Home page.

## **Illuminate**

Each week, I will conduct weekly meetings (virtual office hours) with individuals, groups, or the entire class. Participants may also want an alternative way to meet synchronously with each other for group projects, problem solving, etc. Illuminate is a synchronous, web-conferencing application that allows us to share a white-board, chat, talk, break-up into groups, and perform other tasks in a live environment. To enter our virtual Illuminate Live classroom, simply click on the Kevin's Virtual Office (Illuminate Live!) link under Getting to Know & Contacting Your Instructor on our course home page. You must be inside of our course before clicking on that link because instructor and course information is transferred to Illuminate as a way of directing you to our specific classroom.

## **E-mail**

Course participants can also use e-mail to communicate with me, group members, and each other privately. Please copy me on all communications using e-mail so that I can keep up on what's going on.

## **Telephone**

The telephone is still sometimes the most effective mode for troubleshooting problems related to the course. My phone number, virtual office hour times, and other contact information can be found by clicking on the Instructor Information link on our course's home page.

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## **Pedagogical Rationale**

### **Course Orientation**

As a culminating activity for the course orientation, participants will submit background information about themselves along with their thoughts on what contributes to quality programming, course design, and instruction in the online environment. This assignment gives participants practice with using the discussion forum and creates a sense of community. It also helps participants identify common links among themselves.

### **Weekly Staff Discussion**

Our weekly staff discussions serve as advance organizers to encourage critical thinking and informed participation. Specific discussion questions will be provided with ensuing discussion from all participants. The time specified for the initial posting ensures that all participants have ample opportunity to

interact.

### Individual Meeting w/Director (Reflections)

At the end of the module, participants will be asked to provide a summary of what they feel to have been the most important points covered in the course that week and relate this to their own teaching goals. This exercise has four functions:

- It helps the participants reinforce and synthesize the material covered.
- Each participant personalizes the material, adapting it to his/her own specific professional needs.
- Participants get a multitude of perspectives on the week's subject and how it could be useful to them.
- It gives me insight to understand what parts of the course have been effective and what may need to be taught in more depth the next time.

This activity can be completed in any of the following manners:

- Submit a written summary.
- Submit an audio file of your summary.
- Meet and discuss your summary with me once a week via Elluminate (15-minute session).

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## Grading

### Grades

Participants will be provided a numeric grade for each assignment, but will also be evaluated qualitatively based on the participation levels and abilities to perform the required assignments. The instructor will provide individual and group feedback as needed using a variety of communication methods such as e-mail, the News Forum, and discussion posts.

### Graded Assignments

Orientation Module (8%)	Points
<b>Introduction Assignment:</b> Provide a brief summary of yourself and share components of a quality distance education program.	5
<b>Division Preference Survey:</b> Submit your preference for which division you would like to represent throughout the course.	2.5
<b>Individual Meeting w/Director Preference Survey:</b> Submit your preference for how you would like to participate in a weekly individual staff meeting with the director (your instructor).	2.5
<b>Policy Manual Access &amp; Practice:</b> Request access to the Policy Manual Wiki where final projects will be submitted and add practice page.	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>
Module 1: Accreditation (12%)	Points

<b>Weekly Staff Discussion Post:</b> Answer question specific to accreditation assigned by the director.	10
<b>Weekly Staff Discussion Participation:</b> Participate in our Weekly Staff Discussion by responding to colleagues initial posts and answering any questions within your original post.	10
<b>Individual Meeting w/Director:</b> Reflect on the major principles and issues for this module and ask any unanswered questions.	10
<b>Total</b>	30

<b>Module 2: Institutional Policies (12%)</b>	<b>Points</b>
<b>Weekly Staff Discussion Post:</b> Answer question specific to accreditation assigned by the director.	10
<b>Weekly Staff Discussion Participation:</b> Participate in our Weekly Staff Discussion by responding to colleagues initial posts and answering any questions within your original post.	10
<b>Individual Meeting w/Director:</b> Reflect on the major principles and issues for this module and ask any unanswered questions.	10
<b>Total</b>	30

<b>Module 3: Program Development (12%)</b>	<b>Points</b>
<b>Weekly Staff Discussion Post:</b> Supply a draft policy for ensuring quality specific to a given topic assigned by the director.	10
<b>Weekly Staff Discussion Participation:</b> Participate in our Weekly Staff Discussion by responding to colleagues initial posts and answering any questions within your original post.	10
<b>Individual Meeting w/Director:</b> Reflect on the major principles and issues for this module and ask any unanswered questions about your contribution to the Policy Manual.	10
<b>Total</b>	30

<b>Module 4: Course Development (12%)</b>	<b>Points</b>
<b>Weekly Staff Discussion Post:</b> Supply a draft policy for ensuring quality specific to a given topic assigned by the director.	10
<b>Weekly Staff Discussion Participation:</b> Participate in our Weekly Staff Discussion by responding to colleagues initial posts and answering any questions within your original post.	10
<b>Individual Meeting w/Director:</b> Reflect on the major principles and issues for this module and ask any unanswered questions about your contribution to the Policy Manual.	10
<b>Total</b>	30

<b>Module 5: Instruction (12%)</b>	<b>Points</b>
<b>Weekly Staff Discussion Post:</b> Supply a draft policy for ensuring quality specific to a given topic assigned by the director.	10
<b>Weekly Staff Discussion Participation:</b> Participate in our Weekly Staff Discussion by responding to colleagues initial posts and answering any questions within your original post.	10
<b>Individual Meeting w/Director:</b> Reflect on the major principles and issues for this module and ask any unanswered questions about your contribution to the Policy Manual.	10
<b>Total</b>	30

<b>Module 6: Academic Services (12%)</b>		<b>Points</b>
<b>Weekly Staff Discussion Post:</b> Supply a draft policy for ensuring quality specific to a given topic assigned by the director.		10
<b>Weekly Staff Discussion Participation:</b> Participate in our Weekly Staff Discussion by responding to colleagues initial posts and answering any questions within your original post.		10
<b>Individual Meeting w/Director:</b> Reflect on the major principles and issues for this module and ask any unanswered questions about your contribution to the Policy Manual.		10
<b>Total</b>		30

<b>Final Project (20%)</b>		<b>Points</b>
<b>Policy Manual &amp; Self-Study Guide to Quality:</b> Refine and submit your policies and procedures..		50

<b>Course Total</b>		<b>Points</b>
Total		200

## Grading Scale

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Minimum Score</b>	<b>Maximum Score</b>
A	92%	100%
A-	90%	91%
B+	88%	89%
B	82%	87%
B-	80%	81%
C+	78%	79%
C	72%	77%
C-	70%	71%
D+	68%	69%
D	62%	67%
D-	60%	61%
F	0%	59%