

# GUIDE FOR ONLINE DEVELOPERS (GOLD) RUBRIC

The GOLD Rubric is made up of course development standards aligned to evidence-based practices and industry standards for online learning. Your assigned instructional designer will use an electronic version of the rubric\* to determine if your course meets GOLD standards for UofM Global courses. However, feel free to use this printable document as a resource while you develop your course. The standards are divided into five domains:

- I. Course Overview, Information, and Technology Tools
- II. Design and Layout
- III. Content and Activities
- IV. Interaction
- V. Assessment and Feedback

## I. Course Overview, Information, and Technology Tools

- ☐ Course goals and learning objectives are clearly designed, measurable, and aligned to learning activities and assessments.
- ☐ Learning objectives reflect varying levels of difficulty and facilitate critical thinking.
- ☐ Course uses a Canvas home page to welcome students to the course.
- ☐ Course utilizes the M50 Getting Started Template.
- ☐ Course includes a course information area and/or syllabus that makes course expectations clear and findable.
- ☐ Expectations for timely and regular feedback from the instructor are clearly stated in the Getting Started Module and/or syllabus. (2 business days for communications, 5 business days for assessments, and 3 hours per week for office hours suggested for M50s.)
- ☐ Requisite skills for using technology tools (websites, software, hardware) are clearly stated and supported with resources.
- ☐ Technical skills required for participation in course learning activities scaffold in a timely manner (orientation, practice, and application— where appropriate).
- ☐ When applicable, course includes links to University Enterprise Tools (Canvas, Microsoft 365, Zoom, etc.).

\*The items in this rubric have been adapted from Quality Matters (QM), OLC Scorecard, and WCAG 2.0.

Questions?

Email [um3d@memphis.edu](mailto:um3d@memphis.edu) or visit [memphis.edu/um3d](http://memphis.edu/um3d)



**UM3D**  
INSTRUCTIONAL IMPACT  
*design. develop. deliver.*

# GUIDE FOR ONLINE DEVELOPERS (GOLD) RUBRIC

## II. Design and Layout

- ☐ Each module includes a module-level overview to make module content, activities, assignments, due dates, interactions, and assessments predictable and easy to navigate/find.
- ☐ Module headings and topic links are descriptive, appropriate, and presented in clear sequence. A logical, consistent, and uncluttered layout is established making the course easy to navigate.
- ☐ Any Canvas tools not being utilized have been removed from the Canvas course navigation bar.
- ☐ Content and lectures are chunked into manageable segments.
- ☐ All activities and assignments have clear instructions and deadlines. Grading criteria for each assignment is transparent and clearly aligned to course objectives/outcomes.
- ☐ Text is formatted with readable size (12pt+); fonts and headings enhance readability and structure.
- ☐ Tables are reserved for displaying and organizing data, and not solely for formatting/layout.
- ☐ PowerPoint slides are chunked, use a readable slide layout, and include unique slide titles.

## III. Content and Activities

- ☐ Course offers access to a variety of engaging resources to present content, support learning and collaboration, and facilitate regular and substantive interaction with the instructor.
- ☐ Where available, Open Education Resources (OER), free or low cost materials are used.
- ☐ Course activities/assessments integrate real world applications of the discipline, such as experiential learning, case studies, and problem-based activities.
- ☐ Course materials and resources include copyright and licensing status, clearly stating permission to share where applicable.
- ☐ Text content is available in an easily accessed format, preferably HTML. All text content is readable by assistive technology. This includes PDFs and any text contained in an image.
- ☐ A text or audio equivalent is present for every non-text element (alt text, captions, transcripts, etc.).
- ☐ Text, graphics, and images are understandable when viewed without color. Text is used as the primary method for delivering information.
- ☐ Links use descriptive text (instead of the URL), match the corresponding content, and are active.

# GUIDE FOR ONLINE DEVELOPERS (GOLD) RUBRIC

## IV. Interaction

- ☐ Course design includes tools and strategies for the instructor to provide specific and meaningful feedback.
- ☐ Discussions are meaningful, aligned with course outcomes, and provide opportunities for critical thinking.
- ☐ Students are given opportunities to interact in a learning community and/or collaborate with other students/the instructor. (Options: ongoing Q&A/course help discussion, Microsoft 365, optional Zoom meetings, group discussion boards, group assignments, or Microsoft Teams).

## V. Assessment and Feedback

- ☐ Course includes frequent, appropriate, varied, and authentic methods to assess the learners' mastery of objectives.
- ☐ Criteria for the assessment of a graded assignment are clearly articulated (rubrics, exemplary work, etc.).
- ☐ Students are provided options when demonstrating learning (such as choosing the tool, format, or activity).
- ☐ Course provides opportunities for learners to review their performance and assess their own learning throughout the course (pre-tests, self-tests with feedback, reflective assignments, peer assessments, etc.).
- ☐ Online quizzes and exams randomize question order, randomize answer choice order, and include time restrictions, where applicable.
- ☐ Learners are informed when a timed response is required.
- ☐ Student submissions are screened using plagiarism detection software (e.g. Turnitin) where applicable.
- ☐ In addition to end of year SETE opportunities, the course invites learners to provide descriptive feedback on their experience in the online course (mid semester survey, end of semester survey, optional synchronous course feedback meetings, etc.).

### LET'S WORK TOGETHER

The UM3D team of Instructional Designers and Technology Trainers are here to help you succeed. Sign up for virtual or in person Canvas training sessions or schedule an appointment to meet with a designer to discuss your instructional needs. Questions? Contact us at [um3d@memphis.edu](mailto:um3d@memphis.edu) or visit [memphis.edu/um3d](https://memphis.edu/um3d) to learn more.