



Technical Evaluations of Online Courses

The Office of Academic Instructional Technology and Distance Learning (the Office) provides leadership and support to the University's initiative to enhance teaching and learning through skillful integration of technology and the learning process. The Office is a resource for University faculty in all disciplines, providing guidance and expertise to faculty in developing a wide range of technology-enhanced and online instruction. The Office identifies and evaluates equipment and software for potential utilization within the University, training needs and courses for faculty to assist them in incorporating appropriate technology in their teaching, and identify and develop new markets and opportunities that may extend the University's education mission.

In this, the Office gives technical consultation prior to the design and evaluation prior to the implementation of online courses:

1. The course audience has been identified

While this is an issue for the academic department and school, the Office recommends to the instructor that this issue be addressed prior to the design of a course as the technology used for the content greatly depends on the goal of the course. This will be verbally verified with the course instructor prior to implementation.

2. The choice of technology is driven by the content.

That is, the technology fits the content; not, the content fits the technology. The technology has been chosen because it was the best delivery method for the content and how it is being taught.

3. The course is ADA compliant

Per SHSU Webservices Web Page Checklist

4. Course documents can be easily printed

Students are able to print documents to allow for portability. Some prefer to view content in this fashion.

5. The course layout is easily navigated

The Office verifies that all hyperlinks are correctly connected. This includes, but is not limited to, clear access to the electronic classroom: assignments, lectures, course materials, off-site materials, the online bookstore, student support (library services, computer services), and instructor contact information.

6. Interactivity of the course

The Office verifies student/student, student/instructor, and instructor/class interactivity. This will take place on many levels depending on the individual course. As a result, interactivity is judged on a course-by-course basis, in close collaboration with the instructor. Interactivity may include, but is not limited to, chat rooms, email, discussion boards, and telephone.

7. Media

As online courses continue to grow in popularity, and as electronic media becomes easier and less expensive to create, instructors will rely more heavily on this media in delivering course content to students. The use of media in online courses is a decision left to the instructor and the evaluation of content to the department. However, where used, the technical quality of the media will be evaluated. This includes, but is not limited to, clarity of audio, viewing and physical size of image and video, proper file size for streaming, and media broadcast file length. Again, the Office will provide training and support in the creation of media throughout the course design process.

8. Proper use off-site and secondary resources

The Office will work with instructors and the University's Copyright Officer to verify permissions to use copyrighted materials on-site. The Newton Gresham Library (NGL) has an electronic reserves service that allows, through copyright clearance, the use of articles, text, images, and the like in online courses. The Office will recommend that instructor contact NGL for more information and assistance. Links and citations to off-site materials are an example of proper use.

9. Relative transparency of the technology

Because of the primacy of the course content, technology is only used as a tool. The Office will assist the instructor and ensure that the use of technology does not hinder the dissemination of course content. The instructor and the Office will evaluate this.

If the Office finds any of these aspects lacking, it offers continued training and support to help instructors meet the criteria.



James L. Van Roekel, Director
 vanroekel@shsu.edu

Office: 936.294.3129

Technical Evaluations of Online Courses

Checklist

1. **The course audience has been identified**_____
2. **The choice of technology is driven by the content**_____
3. **The course is ADA compliant**_____
4. **Course documents can be easily printed**_____
5. **The course layout is easily navigated**_____
 Hyperlinks connected_____
6. **Interactivity of the course (students and faculty)**_____
 Email_____ Chat Rooms_____ Discussion Boards_____ Telephone_____
7. **Media**_____
 Text_____ Still Images_____ Audio_____ Video_____ Appropriate file sizes_____
8. **Proper use off-site and secondary resources**_____
 Library materials_____ Off-site citations_____ Copyrighted materials_____ (require library
 director's signature)_____
9. **Relative transparency of the technology**_____

I have reviewed_____.

The course is easily navigable and contains appropriate interactivity. It facilitates the proper use of off-site and secondary resources and maintains a relative transparent use of technology. As such, I recommend that _____be compensated for the development of this online course.

Signature	Date
-----------	------

*Additional signature may be required per the department chair's recommendation.

Chair Signature	Compensation AMT	Date
-----------------	------------------	------

Dean Signature	Date
----------------	------

Provost Signature	Date
-------------------	------