CITL Course Design Framework

Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning

Overview

The CITL Course Design Framework is based on the official scorecard developed by the Online Learning Consortium (OLC). This tool has been adapted to better meet the needs of faculty at TN Tech, focusing specifically on course design elements that support effective, engaging, and accessible online and blended learning experiences.

The CITL Course Design Framework emphasizes flexibility and clarity, making it a practical resource for TN Tech instructors who are designing or revising their courses. It is intended to support course development, course design, accessibility, and faculty self-assessment, with an emphasis on design practices that align with TN Tech's educational priorities and teaching context.

Framework Structure

The framework is organized into two sections, each supporting a scaffolded approach to course development and evaluation. Each section outlines specific objectives that define effective practices in digital learning, providing a structured framework for assessing key aspects of a course.

Essential Design: Evaluates fundamental course components such as learning objectives, instructional materials, communication policies, accessibility, and course organization. This section can be reviewed before or after a course has been offered.

Advanced Design: Encourages enhancements beyond essential requirements, such as adaptive learning strategies, universal design for learning (UDL), and real-world applications. This section can be used at any stage to elevate course quality.

Framework Scale

0: Developing	1: Accomplished	2: Exemplary
Does not meet objective	Adequately meets objective	Thoroughly meets objective

Essential Design Objectives

#	Objective	Score
1	Learning objectives and/or outcomes are specific, measurable, and clearly defined.	
2	Course lists all required learning materials, including technology tools.	
3	Course provides office hours, communication preferences, and response times.	
4	Course provides technical support resources and help for common technical issues.	
5	Course includes step-by-step guides or tutorials for all required technologies.	
6	Course defines grading policies, academic integrity expectations, and late policies.	
7	Course provides an accessibility statement and steps to request accommodations.	
8	Text materials meet accessibility and Universal Design standards.	
9	Videos and other multimedia content meet accessibility standards.	
10	Course includes information for relevant learner support and other services.	
11	Course includes a course schedule with due dates for all assignments and activities.	
12	Course includes an introductory discussion and guidelines for student interactions.	
13	Course site navigation and layout are clear and consistent.	
14	Videos and other multimedia content are of appropriate quality and length.	
15	Course content is up-to-date, relevant, and tied to specific learning objectives.	
16	Course includes clear alignment between learning objectives, assessments, and instructional materials.	
17	Course site provides an organized gradebook that includes all assessments.	
18	Course incorporates formative, low-stakes assessments for frequent engagement.	
19	Course provides a scaffolded approach for summative assessments.	
20	All modules, assignments, and activities include clear and detailed instructions.	
21	Course includes rubrics for all assignments and assessments.	
22	Course workload is balanced and appropriate for the discipline and course level.	
23	Course materials are free of broken links, spelling errors, and incorrect information.	
24	Course includes guidelines for academic integrity and respectful online engagement.	
25	Course includes explicit guidelines for using generative AI.	

Strengths

Areas for Improvement

Advanced Design Objectives

#	Objective	Score
1	Course learning objectives and/or outcomes use learner-centered language.	
2	Course includes a pre-course technology checklist and online readiness quiz.	
3	Course includes an orientation module, video, or guide to navigating the course.	
4	The course provides guidance on how students can seek help if they encounter difficulties, including discussion forums, help requests, contacting the instructor, or using support resources.	
5	Course uses exclusively low- or no-cost materials.	
6	Course provides varied content formats (video, text, etc.).	
7	Course allows students choice in how to demonstrate learning.	
8	Content includes examples that represent a range of learner backgrounds.	
9	Course includes an online forum for muddiest points or questions about the course.	
10	Course incorporates adaptive learning strategies to personalize learning.	
11	Course includes opportunities for learners to contribute to course content (resource sharing, peer teaching, content curation, or collaborative knowledge-building activities).	
12	Course includes structured opportunities (revisions, cumulative projects, reflection activities) for learners to apply instructor or peer feedback to future assignments.	
13	Course includes reflective activities that promote metacognition and self-regulated learning.	
14	Course includes model deliverables for summative assessments.	
15	Course includes assessments with practical, real-world applications.	
16	Modules and content in the course site are released in a timely manner.	
17	Course includes a plan to summarize end-of-module insights based on learner activity.	
18	Course pacing allows for modification based on learner progress.	
19	The course includes mid-course feedback opportunities.	
20	Course includes intentional strategies to build a sense of community and learner belonging.	
21	Course design includes resources like exemplars, guides, study tips, videos, and FAQs to reinforce content and support student success.	
22	Course materials incorporate current, real-world issues and/or professional tools relevant to the discipline.	
23	Course avoids excessive scrolling or nested links by chunking content effectively.	
24	Course modules are structured using templates or repeatable patterns for predictability.	
25	Instructor provides multiple modalities for office hours (Video, chat, asynchronous Q&A options).	

Strengths

Areas for Improvement

Framework Summary

Section	Score
Essential Design (50 points)	
Advance Design (50 points)	
TOTAL	
POINTS POSSIBLE	100

Suggestions for Course Improvement