



Top 5 Things Every Course Should Have



Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning



Meet the Team



Heather Rippetoe

College of Education
Whitson-Hester School of
Nursing
College of Fine Arts



Mallory Matthews

College of Business
Interdisciplinary Studies
Agriculture & Human
Ecology



Lacy Means

College of
Arts & Sciences



Carrie Roberson

College of
Engineering

Session Resources

- Session will be recorded.
- Slide deck will be shared.
- We will be in the chat to answer any questions.
- Book a consultation with your instructional designer!



You tell us.

What is one item
that would be in
your Top 5 things
every course should
have?




Today's Questions

How did we
find the 5
things?

What are
the 5
things?

How do we
include the
5 things?

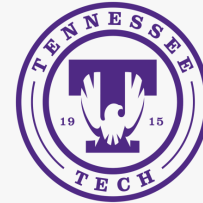


How did we identify the 5?



Experts

We use the [OSCQR -SUNY Course Quality Review Rubric](#)



Students

We conduct anonymous
midterm small group
discussions and surveys (SGIDs)

The OSCQR Course Quality Review Rubric

The SUNY Online Course Quality Review Rubric OSCQR



To help campuses ensure that their online courses are learner centered and well designed, a team of SUNY staff and campus stakeholders has designed the OSCQR rubric, a customizable and flexible tool for online course quality review.

The OSCQR rubric specifically targets online course design. The OSCQR rubric is unique and differs from other online course quality rubrics in several ways. It is not restricted to mature online courses. The rubric can be used formatively with new online faculty to help guide, inform, and influence the design of their new online courses, and, it is non-evaluative.

Conceptually, the rubric and the online course review and refresh process are implemented as a professional development exercise designed to guide online faculty to use research-based effective practices and standards to improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of their online course design, rather than as an online course evaluation, or quality assurance procedure.

[OSCQR – SUNY Online Course Quality Review Rubric](#)

Printable/Editable Scorecard

OLC QUALITY SCORECARD SUITE



OSCQR Course Design Review

OLC Quality Scorecard Suite: OSCQR 4.0

Need help? Click on a standard below for explanation and examples from <https://oscqr.suny.edu>
OSCQR Version Change Log: <https://oscqr.suny.edu/#/changelog/>

Estimated time needed for revision:

Sufficiently Present Minor Revision Moderate Revision Major Revision Not Applicable Action Plan

0-2 hours or less 0-2 hours 2-4 hours

1. COURSE OVERVIEW AND INFORMATION		Sufficiently Present	Minor Revision	Moderate Revision	Major Revision	Not Applicable	Action Plan
	1. Course includes Welcome and Getting Started content.						
	2. Course provides an overall orientation or overview, as well as module-level overviews to make course content, activities, assignments, due dates, interactions, and assessments, predictable and easy to navigate/find.						
	3. Course includes a course information area and syllabus that make course expectations clear and findable.						
	4. A printable syllabus is available to learners (PDF, HTML).						
	5. Course includes links to relevant campus policies on plagiarism, computer use, filing grievances, accommodating disabilities, etc.						
	6. Course provides access to online learner success resources (technical help, support services, orientation, academic honesty, tutoring).						
	7. Course information states whether the course is fully online, blended, or web-enhanced.						
	8. Course provides appropriate guidelines for successful participation regarding technical requirements (e.g., browser version, mobile, publisher resources, secure content, pop-ups, browser issues, microphone, webcam).						
	9. Course objectives/outcomes are clearly defined, measurable, and aligned to learning activities and assessments.						
	10. Course provides contact information for instructor, department, and program.						

Standards that specifically address, or can be leveraged to support the requirements for Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI)



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Anonymous Midterm Feedback (SGIDs)

- In-class option
- Online, synchronous option
- Online, asynchronous option



What are the 5 Things Every Course Should Have?

1

Consistent Layout

Consistent look & feel in the course shell

2

Student-Oriented Syllabus

A student-centered, no-surprise syllabus (with grade items & schedule included)

3

UDL-Inspired Content

Universal Design for Learning principles support accessible content for diverse learners

4

Learning-Centered Interactions

Design and implement engaging and meaningful student interactions

5

Aligned Assessments

Design and implement assessments that align with course, module, and lesson learning objectives



Consistent Look & Feel

Consistent look & feel in the
course shell



Consistent Look and Feel

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Estimated time needed for revision: **Sufficiently Present** 1/2 hour or less **Minor Revision** 1/2-2 hours **Moderate Revision** 2+ hours **Major Revision** **Not Applicable** **Action Plan**

		Sufficiently Present	Minor Revision	Moderate Revision	Major Revision	Not Applicable	Action Plan
2. COURSE TECHNOLOGY & TOOLS							
11.	Requisite skills for using technology tools (websites, software, and hardware) are clearly stated and supported with resources.						
12.	Technical skills required for participation in course learning activities scaffold in a timely manner (orientation, practice, and application - where appropriate).						
13.	Frequently used technology tools are easily accessed. Any tools not being utilized are removed from the course menu.						
14.	Course includes links to privacy policies for technology tools.						
15.	Any technology tools meet accessibility standards.						
3. DESIGN AND LAYOUT							
16.	A logical, consistent, and uncluttered layout is established. The course is easy to navigate (consistent color scheme and icon layout, related content organized together, self-evident titles).						
17.	Large blocks of information are divided into manageable sections with ample white space around and between the blocks.						
18.	There is enough contrast between text and background for the content to be easily viewed.						
19.	Instructions are provided and well written.						
20.	Course is free of grammatical and spelling errors.						
21.	Text is formatted with titles, headings, and other styles to enhance readability and improve the structure of the document.						
22.	Flashing and blinking text are avoided.						
23.	A sans-serif font with a standard size of at least 12 pt is used.						
24.	When possible, information is displayed in a linear format instead of as a table.						
25.	Tables are accompanied by a title and summary description.						
26.	Table header rows and columns are assigned.						
27.	Slideshows use a predefined slide layout and include unique slide titles.						
28.	For all slideshows, there are simple, non-automatic transitions between slides.						



Standards that specifically address, or can be leveraged to support the requirements for Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI).



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What is a template?

- A template is a **customizable, pre-set format** that can help you present **content** and **activities**
- For iLearn at TnTech, we have templates for entire **courses**, for **individual pages** (files) inside courses, and for **content within pages** (files)

[View previous CITL workshop: Crafting Your Course with iLearn Templates](#)

Tech-Direct

Updates ▾

Course Overview ▾

Content Navigator ▾

Return to Last Viewed:  [Student Academic Misconduct Policy](#)

Module 0: Start Here



Module 1: [Title]



Module 2: [Title]



Announcements ▾

Example Welcome Announcement ▾



Welcome **Heather**, to CITL 1010-001: Best Practices in Online Course Design! I'm thrilled to have you join this exciting learning journey. To get started, please navigate to [Module 0: Start Here](#). This module will guide you through important course information, including the syllabus, expectations, and resources. If you have any questions along the way, don't hesitate to reach out. You can do so by adding to the [Ask a Question, Answer a Question](#) discussion post, or by sending me an email. Please check the [Netiquette Guide for Online Courses](#) for online communication expectations. Let's embark on this adventure together and make the most of our time together in this engaging online learning experience!

Dr. LastName

Department / College



Search Topics



Bookmarks



Course Schedule

Table of Contents



Module 0: Start Here



Course & Instructor
Information



Student Policies,
Student Services, &
Technical Supports



Module 1: [Title]



Module 2: [Title]



Module 3: [Title]



Module 0: Start Here



Download

Expand All | Collapse All

100% 12 of 12 topics complete

Course & Instructor Information



Student Policies, Student Services, & Technical Supports



Bookmarks

Course Schedule

Table of Contents ✓

Module 0: Start Here ✓

Module 1: [Title] ✓

Learning Materials

Assignments

Module 2: [Title] ✓

Module 3: [Title] ✓



Download

Expand All | Collapse All



100 % 1 of 1 topics complete

Module 1: [Module Title] ▾



Web Page

Click here to read the overview and learning objectives for this module.

Learning Materials ▾

This section contains content for you to read and/or watch for this module. Refer to your Course Schedule for specific due dates.

Assignments ▾

This section contains activities for you to do, like take a quiz, participate in a discussion, or submit an assignment.

Poll question:

What are your thoughts about “consistent look and feel”?





Student-Oriented Syllabus

A student-centered, no-surprise
syllabus (with grade items &
schedule included)



Student-Oriented Syllabus

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Syllabus Formats



Printable (PDF, .doc)

[Course Syllabus Requirements](#)

[Syllabus Information Guide](#)

[Syllabus Template](#)

[AI Syllabus Statement Options](#)

From TN Tech [Faculty Handbook](#)



Liquid (HTML)

Module Zero Template (see next slide)

Liquid Syllabus/Syllabus Breakdown

The screenshot displays a course management interface with a sidebar on the left and a main content area on the right. The sidebar contains a search bar and a list of navigation items: Course Syllabus, Bookmarks, Course Schedule, Table of Contents (17), Module 0: Start Here (14), Course & Instructor Information (8), Student Policies, Student Services, & Technical Supports (6), Module 1: [Title] (1), Module 2: [Title] (1), and Module 3: [Title] (1). The 'Course & Instructor Information' item is selected and highlighted. The main content area is titled 'Course & Instructor Information' and includes a 'Print' button and a 'Settings' gear icon. Below the title, there is a section for 'Add dates and restrictions...' and a paragraph of text: 'Here is some information about your course and your instructor. Notice also that the link to the printable syllabus is on the top left of your screen.' This section contains three buttons: 'Upload / Create', 'Existing Activities', and 'Bulk Edit'. The main content area lists several course items, each with a title, a type icon, a description, and a checkmark in the right margin. The items are: 'Course Welcome & Introduction' (Web Page), 'Placeholder: Optional Video Introduction from Your Instructor' (Video), 'Course Learning Objectives' (Web Page), 'Meet Your Instructor' (Web Page), and 'Course Information' (Web Page). The interface also features a chat icon in the bottom right corner.

Search Topics

Course Syllabus

Bookmarks

Course Schedule

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Module 0: Start Here 14

Course & Instructor Information 8

Student Policies, Student Services, & Technical Supports 6

Module 1: [Title] 1

Module 2: [Title] 1

Module 3: [Title] 1

Add a module...

Course & Instructor Information

Print Settings

Add dates and restrictions...

Here is some information about your course and your instructor. Notice also that the link to the printable syllabus is on the top left of your screen.

Upload / Create Existing Activities Bulk Edit

- Course Welcome & Introduction ✓
Web Page
Read a brief introduction about the course.
- Placeholder: Optional Video Introduction from Your Instructor ✓
Video
Watch this video introduction from your instructor.
- Course Learning Objectives ✓
Web Page
Read what you will know and be able to do at the end of this course.
- Meet Your Instructor ✓
Web Page
Read a brief introduction from your instructor and learn how to contact them.
- Course Information ✓
Web Page
Read what prerequisites for this course exist, if any, see what textbooks and other materials you

Why a “no surprise syllabus”?

What are some surprises?



- Hardware or software they weren't aware they were going to need (including textbooks)
- Additional assessments added during the semester (major assessments)
- Requirements beyond scheduled class time:
 - Field trips
 - Trips to the Testing Center
 - Asynchronous quiz requirements
- Bonus surprise: Points lost on subsequent assignments because they didn't receive feedback soon enough

[View previous CITL workshop: Creating a Student-Centered Syllabus](#)

You tell us.

Word cloud (submit one word): What is something else that could surprise students during a semester?





UDL-Inspired Content

Universal Design for Learning
principles support accessible content
for diverse learners











UDL-Inspired Content

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	32. Where available, Open Educational Resources, free, or low cost materials are used.						
	33. Course materials and resources include copyright and licensing status, clearly stating permission to share where applicable.						
	34. Text content is available in an easily accessed format, preferably HTML. All text content is readable by assistive technology, including a PDF or any text contained in an image.						
	35. A text equivalent for every non-text element is provided ("alt" tags, captions, transcripts, etc.), and audio description is provided for video-only content.						
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“Universal design for Learning (UDL) is an educational framework based on research in the learning sciences that guides the development of flexible and accessible methods, materials and environments that embrace variability, minimize barriers, and develop learner agency for all.”

The UDL Guidelines

The Universal Design for Learning Guidelines

The goal of UDL is **learner agency** that is purposeful & reflective, resourceful & authentic, strategic & action-oriented.

Design Multiple Means of Engagement



Design Multiple Means of Representation



Design Multiple Means of Action & Expression



Design Options for Welcoming Interests & Identities

- Optimize choice and autonomy
- Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity
- Nurture joy and play
- Address biases, threats, and distractions

Design Options for Perception

- Support opportunities to customize the display of information
- Support multiple ways to perceive information
- Represent a diversity of perspectives and identities in authentic ways

Design Options for Interaction

- Vary and honor the methods for response, navigation, and movement
- Optimize access to accessible materials and assistive and accessible technologies and tools

Design Options for Sustaining Effort & Persistence

- Clarify the meaning and purpose of goals
- Optimize challenge and support
- Foster collaboration, interdependence, and collective learning
- Foster belonging and community
- Offer action-oriented feedback

Design Options for Language & Symbols

- Clarify vocabulary, symbols, and language structures
- Support decoding of text, mathematical notation, and symbols
- Cultivate understanding and respect across languages and dialects
- Address biases in the use of language and symbols
- Illustrate through multiple media

Design Options for Expression & Communication

- Use multiple media for communication
- Use multiple tools for construction, composition, and creativity
- Build fluencies with graduated support for practice and performance
- Address biases related to modes of expression and communication

Design Options for Emotional Capacity

- Recognize expectations, beliefs, and motivations
- Develop awareness of self and others
- Promote individual and collective reflection
- Cultivate empathy and restorative practices

Design Options for Building Knowledge

- Connect prior knowledge to new learning
- Highlight and explore patterns, critical features, big ideas, and relationships
- Cultivate multiple ways of knowing and making meaning
- Maximize transfer and generalization

Design Options for Strategy Development

- Set meaningful goals
- Anticipate and plan for challenges
- Organize information and resources
- Enhance capacity for monitoring progress
- Challenge exclusionary practices

Poll question:

What's your experience with Universal Design for Learning (UDL)?





Learning- Centered Interactions

Design and implement engaging
and meaningful student
interactions



Learning-Centered Interactions

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3 Interactions (Moore, 1989)



Student-Content



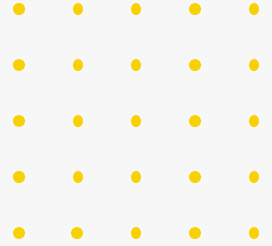
Student-Instructor



Student-Student

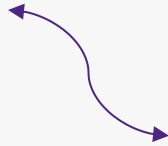


Why Interact?



Cognitive Load

Working memory can only hold so much



Retrieval Practice

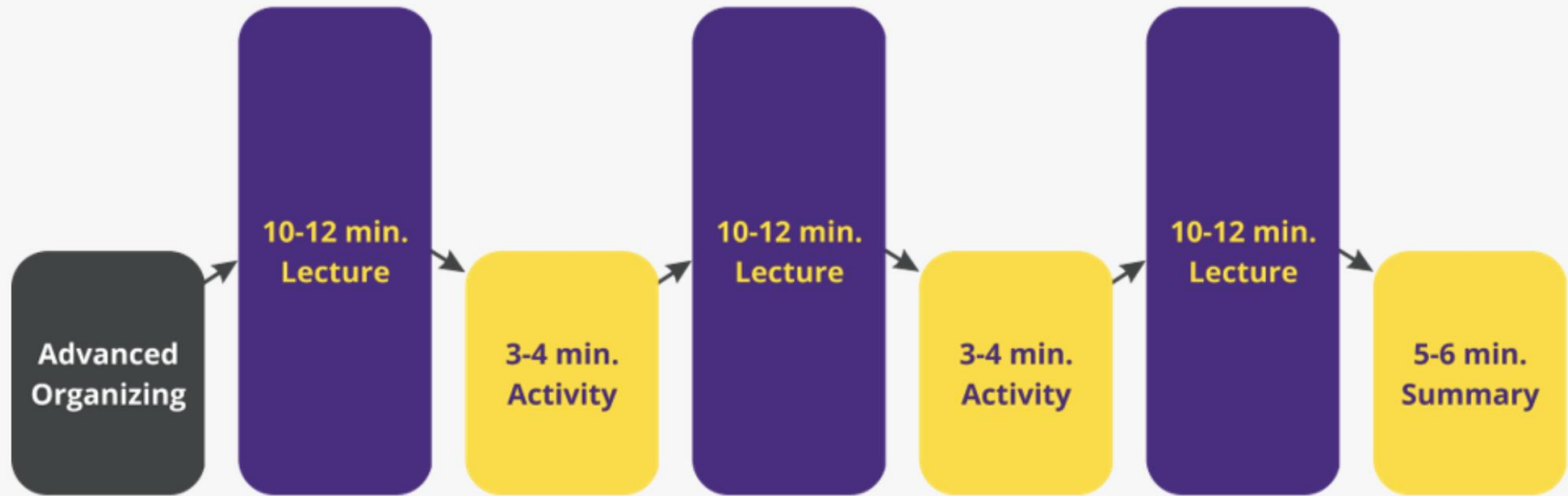
Pull responses rather than constantly pushing new information



Build & Engage Community

Learner-learner/learner-instructor engagement supports learner satisfaction and retention

Design for Interaction



Poll question (select all that apply):

How can the CITL support learning-centered interactions in your teaching?





Aligned Assessments

Design and implement assessments
that align with course, module,
and lesson learning objectives



Aligned Assessments

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6. ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK						
	44.	Course grading policies, including consequences of late submissions, are clearly stated in the Course Information/Syllabus materials.				
	45.	Course includes frequent, appropriate, and authentic methods to assess the learners' mastery of content.				
	46.	Criteria for the assessment of a graded assignment are clearly articulated (rubrics, exemplary work).				
	47.	Course provides opportunities for learners to review their performance and assess their own learning throughout the course (via pre-tests, self-tests with feedback, reflective assignments, peer assessment, etc.).				
	48.	Learners are informed when a timed response is required. Proper lead time is provided to ensure there is an opportunity to prepare an accommodation.				
	49.	Learners have easy access to a well-designed and up-to-date gradebook.				
	49.	Course includes the opportunity for learners to provide descriptive feedback on their experience in the online course, the course design, content, user experience, and technology.				

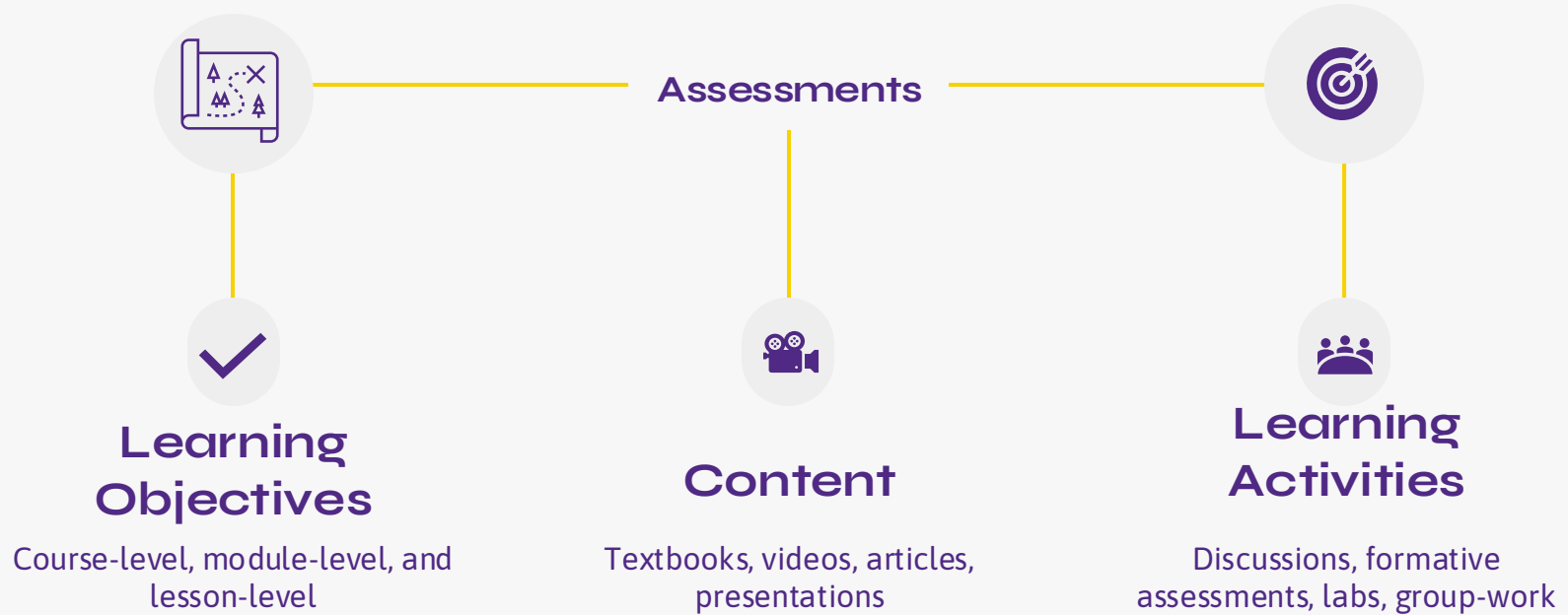
OVERALL FEEDBACK

 = Standards that specifically address, or can be leveraged to support the requirements for Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI).



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Course Alignment



Align with Backwards Design

1

Identify Desired Results

What should students be able to **know** and **do**?

2

Determine acceptable evidence

What will we accept as **evidence** of student understanding and proficiency?

3

Plan learning experiences & instruction

What **activities**, **materials**, and **resources** will equip students with the needed knowledge & skills?

“TiLT” Your Assignments

- TiLT: Transparency in Learning and Teaching
- Provide **assignment sheets** for assessments and include:
 - **Course** and/or **module learning objectives** the assessment measures
 - **Steps** for students to take to complete the assignment
 - **Measurements** you will use to evaluate the assignment (rubrics)
 - **Exemplars**



Less Transparent

LESS TRANSPARENT

EXAMPLE M: SIMPLIFY EXPRESSIONS

Used by permission of Dr. Trina Palmer, Appalachian State University

Name: _____

Directions: Simplify each.

1.
$$\frac{2w^2 - 50}{x^2 - 4w - 5}$$

2.
$$\frac{-3w^2 - 9w + 54}{w^2 - 9w + 18}$$

3.
$$\frac{16v^4w^2}{12w^2 + 20w^4w}$$

More Transparent

MORE TRANSPARENT

Revised EXAMPLE M: SIMPLIFY EXPRESSIONS

Used by permission of Dr. Trina Palmer, Appalachian State University

MAT 1531 Simplification

Due: September 20

Purpose:

The purpose of this assignment is to (1) improve your mathematical writing and (2) demonstrate your algebraic manipulation skills. This assignment will help prepare you for simplifying expressions from calculus and help you communicate where your understanding and misunderstanding are. Knowing how to simplify expressions is like using correct grammar – it makes the written mathematics easier to read and understand. Real-life modeling problems are everywhere such as modeling the spread of COVID-19 or predicting future global temperatures. Simplifying the mathematical models as they are developed reduces possible errors.

Student Learning Outcomes addressed in this assignment:

1. Simplify Algebraic Expressions
2. Communicate algebraic reasoning

Assignment:

Simplify one of the following problems, and include justifications for each manipulation.

$$1. \frac{2w^2 - 50}{x^2 - 4w - 5} \quad 2. \frac{-3w^2 - 9w + 54}{w^2 - 9w + 18} \quad 3. \frac{16w^4 w^2}{12w^2 + 20w^4 w}$$

Sample Problem

Simplify: $\frac{u^2 - 7u + 6}{5 - 5u^2}$	Answer: $\frac{-(u+7)}{5(1+u)}$
$\frac{u^2 - 7u + 6}{5 - 5u^2}$	Restatement
$\frac{(u+7)(u-1)}{5(1-u^2)}$	Factor the numerator and denominator
$\frac{(u+7)(u-1)}{5(1-u)(1+u)}$	Factor the denominator (difference of two squares)
$\frac{-(u+7)(1-u)}{5(1-u)(1+u)}$	Factor out a negative one in the numerator
$\frac{-(u+7)}{5(1+u)} + \frac{(1-u)}{(1-u)}$	Rearrange factors (commutative property of multiplication)
$\frac{-(u+7)}{5(1+u)} * 1$	$\frac{1-u}{1-u} = 1$ assuming $u \neq 1$
$\frac{-(u+7)}{5(1+u)}$	Multiplicative identity

Criteria:

	Proficient	Emerging	Needs Improvement
Algebraic accuracy	Includes most steps and steps are accurate (5)	missing a few steps and/or some steps are inaccurate (3)	many missing steps and/or many inaccurate steps (1)
Mathematics language	reasoning is correct and mostly correct math language (5)	reasoning is mostly correct and mostly correct mathematics language (3)	Much of the reasoning and language is incorrect (1)

Share in the chat.

What is your experience with aligning your assessments with course learning objectives, content, and activities?



What are the 5 Things Every Course Should Have?

1

Consistent Layout

Consistent look & feel in the course shell and in the classroom

2

Student-Oriented Syllabus

A student-centered, no-surprise syllabus (with grade items & schedule included)

3

UDL-Inspired Content

Universal Design for Learning principles attempt to engage different parts of the brain

4

Learning-Centered Interactions

Design and implement engaging and meaningful student interactions

5

Aligned Assessments

Design and implement assessments that align with course, module, and lesson learning objectives



Possible Next Steps

As you reflect on the ideas that have been shared today, what has:

- Affirmed** your thinking ...
- Pushed** your thinking
- What might your learners need you to **do next**?

Reflection questions from CAST.org



RESOURCES:

- [OSCQR – SUNY Online Course Quality Review Rubric](#)
- [Workshop: Crafting Your Course with iLearn Templates](#)
- [Workshop: Creating a Student-Centered Syllabus](#)
- [Universal Design for Learning Version 3.0](#)
- [TiLT Higher Ed](#)
- [CITL Services \(Consults, SGIDs\)](#)

THANK YOU!

Questions, Comments,
Concerns?

[Feedback Survey](#)

Next Session:
Using AI to Reduce Your
Academic Workload
[Register](#)

