Online/Hybrid Course
Quality Assessment Manual

Distance Learning Quality Assessment Committee
Approved by Instructional Council
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Online/Hybrid Course Design Assessment Manual
Columbia Gorge Community College

Table of Contents

Introduction

About a third of the credit classes at Columbia Gorge Community College are either online or hybrid. To provide the best quality to students, CGCC trains instructors and evaluates both the design and delivery of distance learning courses.

Quality Matters (QM) is used for design reviews. It is a rubric as well as a system for professional development. By using QM at CGCC, online and hybrid courses have high standards for course design and navigation for students. Additionally this system adds to the culture of quality at the college.

For example, by reviewing another instructor's course, reviewers learn from their peers. According to Quality Matters, ninety-five percent of course representatives and 81 percent of peer reviewers have made or plan to make changes in their courses as a result of participating in a review.

The delivery of online and hybrid classes is assessed using seven standards. For the best student experience, faculty are required to show evidence that they facilitate student questions, are timely with responses/grading, and exhibit regular and substantive interaction.

Standards for quality in the design and delivery of distance learning classes at CGCC has evolved over time as Quality Matters has progressed with research into design standards and as our understanding of students needs has evolved with faculty experience.

A History of eLearning Quality Assessment at CGCC

Quality course design standards have been a cornerstone of the distance learning program at CGCC since its inception. In the beginning, CGCC used a rubric developed by Portland Community College (PCC). Around the same time, QM began as a three year grant (2003-2006) awarded to Maryland Online from the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE). By 2005 the CGCC checklist was a combination of the PCC and QM rubrics. And in the fall of 2006, CGCC became a subscriber to QM.

In 2009, the Instructional Council (department chairs) created new standards and procedures that include ongoing QM design reviews every three years and standards for delivery. When enough qualified QM peer reviewers had been trained (requiring peer reviewer certification plus formal review experience), the first internal peer-peer review was accomplished with nine online/hybrid classes in the winter of 2011.

Also in 2011 QM created a system that gives reviewers access to the rubric online, helps the CGCC QM Coordinator manage faculty professional development, and provides a searchable library of past reviews. Using this tool, one can see that by 2019, 176 internal reviews and 49 formal reviews had taken place since 2011 with 93% and 96% pass rates respectively.

In the summer of 2017, CGCC had a federal Title IV visit. The federal team required complete access to all classes within the college learning management system (Moodle). Six online courses were reviewed by one member of the audit team and two were deemed "correspondence course" initially. Although after the college responded this conclusion was rescinded, Instructional Council decided to make the process for the delivery reviews more standardized.

To this aim the Distance Learning Quality Assessment Committee (DLQAC) was founded in 2018. They updated the forms and process for delivery reviews and conducted 50 of these evaluations. In 2019, the DLQAC did 143 reviews of all of the hybrid and online classes from the 2018-2019 school year. They also wrote a delivery assessment manual that has been incorporated into this document.

By 2019, 11 instructors were QM peer reviewers and of that number, six master reviewers. The QM program continues to grow via faculty professional development and the design review process has reached many more instructors than in previous years. This new manual blends college policy, delivery standards, and Quality Matters procedures in an effort to make the quality assessment process clearer for all participants.

Process Overview

Design - QM reviews	- Course Development Contracts* *Internal Reviews - 3 years** *Formal Reviews* *Recertifications*
Delivery	*Course Delivery - DLQAC**

(*required) (*faculty reviewers*)

Design

Standards

CGCC uses a custom rubric of Quality Matters (QM) for internal reviews and the latest edition of Quality Matters standards for formal reviews.

Assessment Process

1. Faculty contracts for developing online and hybrid classes are proposed by Department Chairs or Instructional Deans, and signed by the Virtual Campus Coordinator (VCC) and VP of Instructional Services.
2. Before the first term that an online or hybrid class is offered, it is evaluated by the VCC using the CGCC QM rubric. If the course does not meet standards, the VCC will inform the department chair and dean. Until the course meets standards, it may not be offered as an online or hybrid class.
3. Instructors are encouraged to take QM training. If interested, they should contact the Virtual Campus Coordinator.
4. Each course will be evaluated every three years by a QM peer reviewer in winter term. The results will be shared with the department chair. If the course does not meet standards by the eighth week of spring term, the instructor may not teach it as an online or hybrid class.
5. The instructor may ask for a formal evaluation by a team of three reviewers per QM procedures. A successful formal review results in QM recognition in the schedule of classes and the instructor may place the QM logo on their course.

Some Definitions

An *online* course is 100% Internet-based.

A *hybrid* course is online with some on campus classroom sessions. Onground (face-to-face) time is reduced.

A *course representative* is the faculty developer (or updater) of the course.

A *peer reviewer* is certified by QM to review hybrid and online courses for course design quality using the QM rubric. Training includes taking the Applying the Quality Matters Rubric (APPQMR) and peer reviewer courses. At CGCC, an internal peer reviewer is also required to have participated in a formal review.

A *master reviewer* is certified by QM to conduct formal (official three person panel) (*three-person panel*) reviews. This certification requires a third training course.

A *QM Coordinator* (QMC) is certified by QM, serves as the point of contact, and coordinates reviews.

Quality Matters Reviews

New Courses

Faculty contracts for developing online and hybrid classes are proposed by Department Chairs or Instructional Deans, and signed by the Virtual Campus Coordinator (VCC) and Vice President of Instructional Services.

Before the first term that an online or hybrid course is offered, it is evaluated by the VCC using the CGCC QM rubric. If the course does not meet standards, the VCC will inform the department chair and dean. Unless the course meets standards, it may not be offered as an online or hybrid class.

Internal

Each course will be evaluated every three years by a QM peer reviewer in winter term. The results will be shared with the department chair. If the course does not meet standards by the eighth week of spring term, the instructor may not teach it as an online or hybrid class.

Formal

The instructor may ask for a formal evaluation by a team of three reviewers per QM procedures. A successful formal review results in QM recognition in the schedule of classes and the instructor may place the QM logo on their course.

Recertification

The QMC receives yearly reminders from Quality Matters about courses that have been formally reviewed and need recertification after the initial five years. The recertification is valid for three years. Recertification due dates are based on the date that the course was formally recognized, so they occur throughout the year. One reviewer (who is an external master reviewer and subject matter expert) is required.

Timeline

Term	Activity
All	Opportunities for (paid) participation in the APPQMR course and the certification course will be announced by email every quarter by the QM Coordinator.
All	The DLQAC reviews online and hybrid courses for delivery standards at the end of the term.
Before Winter	1. Internal QM review teams established. 2. Course representative will receive a notice by email to complete a course worksheet. 3. The QM coordinator notifies the LMS administrator that a Moodle shell is needed for the review.
Winter	Internal reviews conducted. 1. After the initial review, the peer reviewer will send the course representative an email with recommendations. The course representative and the peer reviewer may decide to meet by phone, Zoom, or in person to discuss missing standards in detail.

	2. Once the course design meets Quality Matters standards (per QM rules), the peer reviewer will submit the final report, which will be available to the course representative online. 4. An outcome response form will be completed online by the course representative.

Email to Winter Term Reviewees - Copy to Department Chairs

Dear X,

Every three years, all online and hybrid courses are reviewed for Quality Matters course design standards. Your course is scheduled to be reviewed this coming winter term by one of your faculty colleagues at CGCC. The reviews are collegial and meant to help with periodic updates.

(For faculty who have not taken the Quality Matters APPQMR course: If you would like to learn more about Quality Matters standards, please consider taking the two week online *Applying the Quality Matters Rubric (APPQMR)* course, which is offered starting every week. I can sign you up and arrange that you are paid for your time. And/or please take a look at the rubric, which is available in the Teaching Online course on our Moodle site.)

By early winter term, we will

1. contact you about the review
2. give you the name of your reviewer
3. make a copy of your course for review purposes
4. ask you to fill out a worksheet with course information
5. give you the opportunity to edit your course shell

The review will begin in January and you will have winter term to work with your reviewer, getting suggestions and ideas from an experienced online instructor.

After the review the course will be ready for use in future terms if it meets Quality Matters standards. If it does not meet QM standards, you will have until the eighth week of spring term to work with your reviewer. If it does not meet standards at that point, the

department chair will be notified and you may not be able to teach this class as online/hybrid in the future until standards are met.

Please contact me or a member of the [Distance Learning Quality Assessment Committee](#) if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you,
Paula

Delivery

Standards

Online/hybrid teaching expectations:

1. Provides a discussion forum on Moodle for student questions to the instructor.

2. Demonstrates response within a 24-hour period during weekdays to questions regarding the course or learning materials.

3. Maintains active links to online resources within the course shell.

4. Evaluates and returns graded assignments in a timely manner (as defined in the syllabus) and provides substantive feedback.

5. Keeps a record of all graded activities in the Moodle gradebook.

6. Has regular and substantive interaction (RSI) with students within Moodle.

7. Provides RSI documentation as a hidden page at the top of the Moodle shell.

Delivery Assessment Resources
- [Regular and Substantive Interaction in Your Distance Learning Class 2019](#)
- [Online/Hybrid Delivery Review Form](#)
- [RSI Form for Online Instructors](#)

Assessment Process

1. The Distance Learning Quality Assessment Committee will meet to review and refine the quality assessment process in online and hybrid classes.
2. At the end of each quarter committee members will:
   a. use the Online/Hybrid Delivery Review Form to complete reviews,
   b. send completed reports to the instructor, and
   c. be available for consultation and questions.
3. Instructors, department chairs, and the VP of Instructional Services may request specific courses for review in advance of the assessment process.
4. If a course meets delivery standards, it will not be reviewed again for 2 years.

5. If the course does not meet delivery standards, the committee member will do another review the next time the instructor teaches the class.
6. If the course does not meet delivery standards for a second time, the committee member will contact the department chair and dean of the faculty member, forwarding the emails and completed reviews.

Email to Faculty About Upcoming Delivery Assessment

Dear Online/Hybrid Faculty Member,

Thank you for your hard work and expertise as part of CGCC's distance learning program. As part of our commitment to quality learning for our students, the Distance Learning Quality Assessment Committee, at the end of each term, reviews online and hybrid courses, using the CGCC standards for delivery. Please review these standards so that you understand what the Committee will be assessing.

One of the main components that the Committee looks for is "regular and substantive interaction" (RSI) with students in all hybrid and online classes. CGCC defines RSI as "multiple instances...of instructor/learner interaction which is academic in nature...on at least two separate days per week." You may find more information about this in the document Regular and Substantive Interaction in your Classroom.

Please make sure you provide a (hidden) link to an RSI form at the top of the Moodle shell of any online or hybrid class that you teach. This form should help assessors (CGCC or federal) find instances of RSI in your class.

After the end-of-term review, you will receive an email from a committee reviewer, as well as a completed review form. If your course meets delivery standards, then you will not have another review for 2 years. If not, your course will be reviewed the next time you teach the course.

This review is intended to help your course meet CGCC standards, especially around RSI. If you have any questions, please contact your reviewer, who has taught online and hybrid courses for many years and looks forward to working with you.

Best regards,
Paula Ascher

Email to Faculty with Completed Review Form

Dear ,
I am writing to you as a part of the Distance Learning Quality Assessment Committee.
Each quarter we review online and hybrid classes for delivery standards. Please find
attached your copy of the Online/Hybrid Delivery Review Form, which I completed for
your course.

ADD A OR B

   A) Because you met delivery standards, you will not have another review for 2
      years.

   B) Because you did not meet delivery standards, I will do another review the next
      time you teach this course. If at that time you do not meet delivery standards,
      your department chair and dean will be notified.

For more information about the requirement for teaching hybrid and online classes at
CGCC, please see the college website. If I can answer any questions, or assist you,
please contact me.

Thank you,
(DLQAC Member)
(Title and Contact Information)

RSI Form for Instructors

Documentation of Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI)
(course title)

Quantitative: CGCC defines regular interaction as multiple instances of interaction on at least two separate days per week.

Qualitative: CGCC defines substantive interaction as instructor/learner interaction which is academic in nature.

1. *To demonstrate RSI, please state where reviewers find twice weekly substantive interaction with students in this course. Kindly give enough information so that the reviewer can easily find these highlights of your interactions with students. If your interaction varies by week, please feel free to fill out the table below.*

2. *For hybrid courses, what RSI happens in class, and what RSI happens in the Moodle shell?*

Optional Chart (fill this in if it helps you explain the RSI in your course):

Reviewers find RSI in the following examples:	
Week 1	
Week 2	
Week 3	

Week 4	• •
Week 5	• •
Week 6	• •
Week 7	• •
Week 8	• •
Week 9	• •
Week 10	• •
Week 11	• •

Online/Hybrid Delivery Review Form

Online/Hybrid Delivery Review Form
Requirements for Teaching Distance Learning Classes

This form addresses the delivery of online and hybrid classes. For course design using Quality Matters, please refer to the Course Design Assessment Manual.

Course: **Instructor:**   **Hybrid or Online:**

Reviewer: **Date :**

Online/hybrid teaching expectations	Yes	No	See Comments
1. Provides a discussion forum on Moodle for student questions to the instructor.			
2. Demonstrates response within a 24 hour period during weekdays to questions regarding the course or learning materials.			
3. Maintains active links to online resources within the course shell.			
4. Evaluates and returns graded assignments in a timely manner (as defined in the syllabus) and provides substantive feedback.			
5. Keeps a record of all graded activities in the Moodle gradebook.			
6. Has regular and substantive interaction (RSI) with students within Moodle.			
7. Provides RSI documentation as a hidden page at the top of the Moodle shell.			

Comments by Reviewer:

Distance Learning Contract Template

Distance Learning Course Development Contract

This is an agreement by and between XXX and Columbia Gorge Community College for the design & development of online or hybrid courses as outlined below. The course design must meet Quality Matters standards and the syllabus must conform to the CGCC syllabus content checklist. Review and approval of the work by the Virtual Campus Coordinator is required for authorization of payment.

Course Number and Title:

A: Number of Credit Hours Applicable:

B: Payment per Credit Hour:

Total Payment Due: (=AxBx0.5)

Contract Begins: **Contract Ends:**

Pay Rate Confirmation: _____   _____
                                     Payroll & Benefits   Date

I hereby grant to Columbia Gorge Community College the right of ownership for this course and its contents:

_____
Signature of Faculty Member   Date

_____
Signature of Department Chair   Date

_____
Signature of Virtual Campus Coordinator   Date

_____
Signature of Instructional Dean   Date

_____
Signature of Vice-President of Instructional Services   Date