

Quality Learning & Teaching QLT Rubric 2nd Edition (2017)

The CSU Quality Learning and Teaching (QLT) rubric was developed in 2011 and is designed to help support and identify exemplary practices for the design and delivery of online and hybrid courses. The 2nd Edition of the rubric consists of 57 objectives organized into 10 sections. A subset of 24 QLT objectives are identified as “CORE” elements that should be present in a quality online course with the term “CORE” denoted to the right of the objective number.

- [Section 1 Course Overview and Introduction \(8 objectives\)](#): Instructor gives a thorough description of the course, as well as introducing students to the course.
- [Section 2 Assessment and Evaluation of Student Learning \(6 objectives\)](#): Student Evaluation and Assessment refers to the process used to gather evidence of the achievement of the Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes (SLOs). It is strongly recommended that instructors contact the Office of Academic Assessment for assistance and information about this section.
- [Section 3 Instructional Materials and Resources Utilized \(6 objectives\)](#): Addresses the variety of materials and material formats the instructor has chosen to present course content and enable students to meet relevant learning outcomes and, when possible, the affordability of chosen course materials.
- [Section 4 Students Interaction and Community \(7 objectives\)](#): Addresses (1) the opportunities students have to interact with the content, their peers, and their instructor, and (2) how well the course design encourages students to become active learners and contribute to the online course community.
- [Section 5 Facilitation and Instruction \(8 objectives\)](#): Addresses how well the instructor facilitates the course, communicates with students, engages students to be active learners, and reinforces the development of a sense of community among course participants.
- [Section 6 Technology for Teaching and Learning \(5 objectives\)](#): Addresses how well the instructor utilizes technology to effectively deliver course content, engage students in learning activities (individual, student-to-student, and instructor-to-student), and allow students to express themselves or demonstrate learning.
- [Section 7 Learner Support and Resources \(4 objectives\)](#): Addresses the program, academic, and/or technical resources available to learners. Though instructors may not play the direct support role, they should be aware of potential issues and promote what is available to support students.
- [Section 8 Accessibility and Universal Design \(6 objectives\)](#): Addresses the course’s adherence to accessibility and universal design principles that are critical to some learners but that benefit all learners. NOTE: It is strongly recommended that instructors contact their campus disability service center for assistance and information.
- [Section 9 Course Summary and Wrap-up \(3 objectives\)](#): Addresses the opportunities students are given to summarize the semester, establish the connection between this course and other courses, and prepare to start the next phase of their program/progress.
- [Section 10 Mobile Design Readiness \(optional; 4 objectives\)](#): As students increasingly rely on mobile phones and tablets to access and interact with course content, it is important to be aware of a few factors that can make the experience more successful for students. This does not mean that all course components (e.g., online exams) must be tailored toward mobile device usage. However, general course resources (text, audio, video) should be mobile-friendly.

Please read each section title and objective carefully. Examples are provided to promote clarity.

Section 1 Course Overview and Introduction Objectives	Section 1 Course Overview and Introduction Examples
<p>1.1 (CORE) The instructor uses the course environment to provide clear and detailed instructions for students to begin accessing all course components, such as syllabus, course calendar, assignments, and support files.</p>	<p>Welcome messages or materials introducing course structure/ components are highly recommended.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is there a “start here” or “welcome” link? ● Is there a course tour or overview? ● Are there clear statements for students about how to begin coursework?
<p>1.2 (CORE) Detailed instructor information is available to students and includes multiple formats for being contacted by students, availability information, brief biographical information, and a picture of the instructor.</p>	<p>The instructor introduces him/herself to the class and provides more than one way to be contacted such as email, phone, and/or office hours (in-person and/or online).</p>
<p>1.3 (CORE) The course description includes the purpose and format of the course, as well as prerequisite knowledge and competencies, if applicable.</p>	<p>The instructor introduces the purpose of the course, the course format (online/blended), and any prerequisite knowledge required.</p>
<p>1.4 The course etiquette expectations for various forms of course communication and dialog (e.g., chat, "hangout," email, online discussion) are presented and clear to the student.</p>	<p>Rules of conduct may include use of the language and formatting. See further at Netiquette: Make it Part of Your Syllabus.</p> <p>For blended or flipped courses, face-to-face etiquette and participation expectations (e.g., pair work, group work, discussions) are presented and clear to the student. Rules of conduct include expectations regarding listening, respecting others’ opinions, and contributing to pair and group work. To encourage student participation, the instructor may require students to complete an online post or quiz as a “ticket” for entering the face-to-face class.</p>
<p>1.5 (CORE) Academic integrity or "code of ethics" is defined. Related institutional policies for students to adhere are clearly stated and/or links to those policies (e.g., online catalog; institution web page) is provided.</p>	<p>Policies typically include cheating, plagiarism, and copyright. The instructor may also provide sample work that demonstrates plagiarism. It is important to include any links to campus policies.</p>



Section 1 Course Overview and Introduction Objectives	Section 1 Course Overview and Introduction Examples
1.6 A list of technical competencies necessary for course completion is provided, identifying and delineating the role/extent the online environment plays in the total course.	Technical competencies may include the use of Management System, downloading and uploading, file management/sharing, communications tools, collaboration tools, discipline-specific software or hardware. In addition, instructors may want to point students to the CSU Stanislaus Online Readiness Self-Assessment .
1.7 The instructor provides samples of student work and provides opportunities for students to ask questions.	The instructor may do a mock exercise, show an example of an assignment, discuss readings, and review projects.
1.8 The instructor asks students to share their own learning goals.	The instructor encourages students to share why they take the course and asks about the relevancy of the course to their academic degree, daily life, and potential careers.

Section 2 Assessment of Student Learning Objectives	Section 2 Assessment of Student Learning Examples
2.1 (CORE) All Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes (SLOs) are specific, well-defined, and measurable.	Learning Objectives are measurable and observable, e.g., define, apply, synthesize in Bloom's Taxonomy . Note: If your course level objectives are mandated and not measurable, then module or weekly level objectives should be measurable and support course level objectives.
2.2 (CORE) The grading policy is provided in a manner that clearly defines expectations for the course and respective assignments.	The instructor provides late submission policy and scale, weights of respective assignments, and the corresponding letter grade if scores are accumulated at the end.
2.3 (CORE) The learning activities (including the assignments and ungraded activities) promote the achievement of the SLOs.	The instructor explains how learning activities such as assignments or discussions contribute to the achievement of the stated SLOs. E.g., A quiz asking students to identify and label body parts would align with an objective such as "Students will be able to identify and label body parts of a human female". A forum having students talk about various body parts, would not align with the objective.
2.4 (CORE) The assessment instruments (e.g., rubrics, grading sheets) are detailed and appropriate to the student work and respective outcomes being assessed. This includes assessing	There are multiple ways for students to demonstrate competence or mastery. E.g., research project, paper, tests, presentations, or multimedia projects. Students are not just graded for online participation but the quality of their participation and contributions. A clear articulation of requirements to be successful at the assignment must be present.



Section 2 Assessment of Student Learning Objectives	Section 2 Assessment of Student Learning Examples
modes of online participation and contributions.	
2.5 (CORE) Throughout the semester, the instructor provides multiple opportunities to give feedback on students' learning and to help students "self-check" their learning.	Activities may include but not limited to blogs for reflection, peer review, practice test and draft of term paper, module summary. Instructor effectively uses Learning Management System gradebook (or similar) for timely quantitative and qualitative feedback
2.6 Throughout the semester, the instructor provides multiple opportunities to solicit feedback from their students about their learning and on the course for the improvement of the course.	The instructor may consider the use of surveys, discussion forums, or item analyses to collect feedback or attitudinal data (that goes beyond student learning outcomes) on the effectiveness or difficulty of the resources and activities (e.g., "Muddiest Point"), or item analysis of test questions in order to improve the course in the future.

Section 3 Instructional Materials and Resources Objectives	Section 3 Instructional Materials and Resources Example
3.1 (CORE) The instructor provides students with adequate time and notice to acquire course materials.	The instructor includes instruction in the syllabus or elsewhere in the course as to acquire course materials including textbooks, and other types of external resources. This information is released to students prior (emails, or announcements) to the course start.
3.2 The syllabus lists whether textbooks and materials are required or recommended.	The instructor separates the materials and labels them as either required or recommended.
3.3 The instructor articulates the purpose of all materials as to how they are related to the course and module learning objectives.	For required and recommended materials, there are brief statements as to the value/purpose in meeting student learning objectives/outcome(s). If external links/websites are used, the links should be self-evident, or a short description of the specific link needs to be provided instead of posting a general link for students to explore.
3.4 When possible, the instructor provides options in terms of how students acquire course materials, including Open Educational Resources.	Course materials include both the Open Educational Resources (e.g., MERLOT) and external materials.
3.5 (CORE) There is a variety of instructional material types and perspectives, while not overly relying on one content type such as text.	Materials types include PowerPoint, videos, text. Multiple perspectives refer to different opinions from scholars in the field.

Section 3 Instructional Materials and Resources Objectives	Section 3 Instructional Materials and Resources Example
3.6 Modeling academic integrity, the instructor appropriately cites all resources and materials used throughout the course.	These resources and materials include text, images, tables, videos, audio, and website. In addition to citation, when possible, direct link to the source may be provided.

Section 4 Students Interaction and Community Objectives	Section 4 Students Interaction and Community Examples
4.1 (CORE) At the beginning of the course, the instructor provides an opportunity to have students self-introduce themselves to develop a sense of community.	The instructor may encourage students to post their pictures and share some personal information such as hobbies to build the community at the beginning. Example: Icebreaker forum, glossary posts, or a blog.
4.2 The instructor provides information about being a successful learner/student.	<p>For the online portion of the course, the instructor provides a self-assessment for students to identify their readiness for learning online and learning strategies or provides a link to an online readiness survey such as the Online Readiness Self- Assessment from CSU Stanislaus.</p> <p>For a blended or flipped course, the instructor provides information about being a successful student in a collaborative, active learning classroom. Guidelines for active participation such as the Rubric for Student Self-Assessment of Collaborative Work are provided to students. The instructor may also provide a face-to-face course overview or tutorial on being a successful learner in a blended or flipped course.</p>
4.3 (CORE) Navigation throughout the online components of the course is logical, consistent, and efficient.	Discussions are organized in clearly defined forums, threads, or communities. The course carries consistent structure for across modules.
4.4 (CORE) The learning activities facilitate and support active learning that encourages frequent and ongoing peer-to-peer engagement.	<p>For all activities, a statement of the task is provided, with clear and concise outcomes that are appropriate and reasonable. Rules for collaboration, assigning roles, benchmarks and expectations of participation are clearly stated.</p> <p>For a blended course, face-to-face and online content and activities are clearly connected and integrated. Any given instructional activity is appropriate to the strengths and weaknesses of the modality (see, for example, Blended Learning: Integrating Online and Face-to-Face Courses and Designing a Partially Online Course: What goes where and when).</p>



Section 4 Students Interaction and Community Objectives	Section 4 Students Interaction and Community Examples
	For a flipped course, the instructor ensures student preparation by using a variety of methods; these could include, for example, the use of online assessments (e.g., quizzes) before the face-to face sessions that provide immediate feedback to students, as well as low-stakes assessment during the face-to-face sessions.
4.5 The modes and requirements for student interaction are clearly communicated.	Requirements for participation (e.g., frequency, length, timeliness) are included in the syllabus and/or in the description of the assignment within the module.
4.6 the instructor clearly explains his or her role regarding participation in the course. Instructor participates in, facilitates, and manages student participation, yet lets students take reasonable ownership.	<p>The instructor explains his/her role regarding participation in the course through the syllabus, welcome video, or related materials.</p> <p>The instructor works to keep students on task/topic with their online discussions. The instructor may offer prompts to refocus students to the task at hand or there may be the desired effect simply by engaging with the discussion group.</p>
4.7 (CORE) The course learning activities help students understand fundamental concepts and build skills useful outside of the course.	Learning activities engage students in learning some basic concepts, but also give students opportunities to use higher level learning skills such as apply, analyze, etc., to make connections with real-world problem solving.

Section 5 Facilitation and Instruction Objectives	Section 5 Facilitation and Instruction Examples
5.1 The instructor was helpful in identifying areas of agreement and disagreement on course topics.	Through moderation of course discussions, the instructor presents areas where ideas or viewpoints differ. S/he uses differences as teachable moments, either resolving them based on hard data or acknowledging the respective viewpoints as valid.
5.2 The instructor helps students understand the importance of course topics and content in support of course activities and any related practical experiences.	<p>It is important to make connections between the content and activities within the course, between the current course and other courses students have taken, and with related practical experiences. Additional methods of helping students understand the importance of course topics may include observations, internships, and service-learning experiences.</p> <p>A specific example for a marketing class studying the principles of proper product placement and the instructor assigning the task of photographing at least two real products next time students are out shopping. Students post the pictures to a wiki/blog and explain the good or bad application of the principles studied. Students must cite the text and/or resources used in class to defend their reasoning.</p>



Section 5 Facilitation and Instruction Objectives	Section 5 Facilitation and Instruction Examples
5.3 The instructor presents the course material and concepts in an effective and engaging manner.	<p>Lectures are presented clearly, concisely, and at an appropriate pace. Instructor follows guidelines for effective lecturing (such as those found at Stanford's Checklist for Effective Lecturing), including having clear objectives, an organized delivery of information, and an appropriate amount of material.</p> <p>For blended or flipped courses, the lecture promotes active learning through, for example, the use of interactive activities embedded in the lecture that provide immediate online feedback (see a discussion of this in the article "Learning is not a spectator sport").</p>
5.4 The instructor encourages students to explore new concepts through the course experience.	Rather than limiting all students to the same traditional or narrow focus, the instructor allows students latitude/choice around course topics. Note: The ability to do this varies by discipline and topic.
5.5 The instructor helped to focus discussion on relevant issues.	None
5.6 (CORE) The instructor provides feedback in a timely fashion.	The instructor uses the Learning Management System efficiently to respond to student work submissions with scores and feedback related to strengths and/or weaknesses.
5.7 The instructor provides communications about important goals and course topics as opportunities arise.	For example, the instructor sends an announcement about a change of lecture focus and proper readings prior to class. The instructor may post a clarification on a common question about a topic.
5.8 (CORE) The instructor provides reminders of due dates and duration of respective modules, as well as other instructions to keep students on task.	For example, the instructor enters all date ranges and due dates into the Learning Management System, and reminders are sent to students.

Section 6 Technology for Teaching and Learning Objectives	Section 6 Technology for Teaching and Learning Examples
6.1 The tools and media support the course learning objectives/outcomes.	Examples include use of videos or animation to demonstrate the process of photosynthesis.
6.2 (CORE) The instructor takes advantage of the current tools provided by the Learning Management System (or similar) to enhance learning.	The course uses a virtual classroom for synchronous web conferencing (e.g., chat, Zoom). The glossary tool is used to post important course terms. Group tools are used to enhance peer-to-peer engagement.



Section 6 Technology for Teaching and Learning Objectives	Section 6 Technology for Teaching and Learning Examples
6.3 The technological tools and resources used in the course enable student engagement and active learning.	The instructor uses collaborative software such as Google docs, wikis, or Zoom to work on group projects and/or SoftChalk to engage students in mediated learning.
6.4 (CORE) The instructor provides clear information regarding access to the technology and related resources required in the course.	The instructor provides information about where and how to acquire and use the technologies. For downloads, the instructor provides direct links. Any costs are specified up-front. Tutorials are provided on how to use the tool/technology.
6.5 Acceptable technological formats for assignment completion and submissions have been articulated.	Rather than limiting the acceptable format to one content or technology type, the instructor is open to allowing students to meet objectives using multiple formats for assignment completion such as word processing, electronic poster creation, multimedia artifact, or combination of these (mash-up).

Section 7 Learner Support and Resources Objectives	Section 7 Learner Support and Resources Examples
7.1 The instructor states her or his role in the support process.	Though some of the support necessary may fall outside of the instructor role or expertise, the instructor can advocate for students to avail themselves of related support services.
7.2 (CORE) The course syllabus (or related) lists and/or links to a clear explanation of the technical support provided by the campus and suggestions as to when and how students should access it.	Technical support may mean the Information Technology (IT) help desk where students would seek assistance when they have technical problems with the Learning Management System.
7.3 (CORE) The course syllabus (or related) provides information about the campus academic (non-technical) support services and resources available to support students in achieving their educational goals. E.g., Disability Support Services, Writing Center, Tutoring Center).	Academic support services may include but not limited to the Library, writing center, online tutoring service. Resources may include online orientation for new students, successful learning strategies for online learners, Lynda.com training videos.
7.4 The course syllabus (or related) provides information regarding how the institution's student support (non-academic, non-technical) services and	Such services usually include but are not limited to online registration, advising and counseling.



Section 7 Learner Support and Resources Objectives	Section 7 Learner Support and Resources Examples
resources (E.g., advising, mentoring) can help students succeed and how they can access these services.	

Section 8 Accessibility and Universal Design Objectives	Section 8 Accessibility and Universal Design Examples
8.1 (CORE) The syllabus (or similar) links to the campus accessible policy, whether it is required or recommended by the institution.	San Francisco State University, Accessible Technology Initiative website contains information about accessible instructional materials and web accessibility .
8.2 The instructor supports a range of learning styles and abilities for all students, rather than making reactive accommodations for those with registered disabilities.	Using the principles of Universal Design for Learning, as described in EnACT's UDL- Universe: A Comprehensive Faculty Development Guide supports a wide-range of methods to present and engage with content, and allows students to demonstrate their learning in multiple modalities. This support does not entail sacrificing academic rigor or student learning outcomes. The goal is supporting the needs of all learners as opposed to having an inflexible teaching and learning process. For example, students are given the option of presenting a final project in the form of a written essay, multimedia presentation, or a video. Course content is presented in written formats, as well as in video or audio.
8.3 (CORE) A clear explanation of the disability support services (DSS) is provided and clear links to DSS resources are provided.	San Francisco State University's (SFSU) Disability Programs and Resource Center (DPRC) has developed a Disability Access Statement for course syllabi. In addition, the instructor can link students to the following URL for the DPRC: http://access.sfsu.edu/content/students
8.4 Students can clearly ascertain the role of the instructor in providing support for those officially registered with the campus disability support services office.	The instructor provides students with a clear explanation of the instructor's role in supporting students registered with DSS. The instructor is familiar with DSS resources and cooperates with DSS to comply with any accommodation request.



Section 8 Accessibility and Universal Design Objectives	Section 8 Accessibility and Universal Design Examples
<p>8.5 (CORE) The course documents and text materials created by the instructor or from external sources are in formats that are accessible to students with disabilities.</p>	<p>All text materials (readings, supplemental materials, worksheets, presentation notes, etc.) in the course must be available in a machine-readable digital text format and implement accessibility best practice. While most digital documents (Word documents, webpages, PDFs of journal articles, etc.) are already machine-readable, scans of printed texts or printed hardcopies of texts are generally NOT machine-readable. Instructors should coordinate with their campus DSS to assure that their text materials are machine-readable.</p> <p>For example, DPRC at SF State provides an Accessible Media Quick Converter that can be used to quickly convert electronic document files, such as PDF scans of text, into accessible formats.</p> <p>It is not required that all video (lecture recordings, films, online videos, etc.) be captioned or have audio descriptions or provide a downloadable transcript link, but instructors should give preference to videos with captions, transcripts or audio descriptions when feasible.</p> <p>Captions or audio descriptions are REQUIRED only in two cases:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A student registered with DSS requires captions or audio descriptions as an accommodation. The instructor should cooperate with DSS to provide captions or audio descriptions, as instructed by DSS staff. 2. The course is part of CSU CourseMatch. Then ALL videos MUST be captioned (audio descriptions are not required for CourseMatch). Instructors should contact and coordinate with their campus DSS office to provide captions before the videos are accessed by students. <p>If accessibility of a particular course material is not practical, the instructor provides an equally effective accessible alternative for students. Instructors should collaborate with DSS and campus technology services to provide effective alternatives.</p>
<p>8.6 The instructor and course use officially supported campus technologies, which are already fully accessible and assistive technology ready. Any third-party tools used are accessible and assistive technology ready when feasible.</p>	<p>Contact your campus academic technology unit for information regarding accessible campus technology solutions.</p> <p>It is not required that all third-party tools be fully accessible, but instructors should give preference to accessible tools when it is feasible. DSS or your campus Academic Technology unit can help to check if a third-party tool is accessible.</p> <p>Accessibility for third-party tools is REQUIRED in the following cases:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A student registered with DSS requires an accommodation. The instructor should cooperate with DSS to provide appropriate accommodations, as instructed by DSS staff. 2. The course is part of CSU Coursematch. Then ALL third-party tools MUST be accessible. Instructors should contact and

Section 8 Accessibility and Universal Design Objectives	Section 8 Accessibility and Universal Design Examples
	<p>coordinate with DSS to assure third-party tools are accessible before the tools are accessed by students.</p> <p>If accessibility of a particular third-party tool is not practical, the instructor provides an equally effective accessible alternative for students. Instructors should collaborate with DSS and campus technology services to provide effective alternatives.</p>

Section 9 Course Summary and Wrap-up Objectives	Section 9 Course Summary and Wrap-up Examples
<p>9.1 The instructor provides students opportunities to ask questions as a form of closure and to foster insight into accomplishments.</p>	<p>The instructor uses discussion threads to ask students (1) if they have any questions and (2) to reflect on their progress toward their learning objectives and outcomes.</p>
<p>9.2 The instructor provides students with feedback about their overall learning and progress and their experiences of the term.</p>	<p>The instructor includes specific, summative feedback on student learning across the term (semester or quarter).</p>
<p>9.3 The instructor provides opportunities for students to reflect on their learning and connect their individual learning goals with the expectations (stated learning objectives and outcomes) of the instructor.</p>	<p>The instructor asks students questions to compare what they can do now, having met the student learning objectives, with what they could do prior to taking the course.</p>

Section 10 Mobile Design Readiness Objectives	Section 10 Mobile Design Readiness Examples
<p>10.1 The course content was easy to read on multiple platforms such as PCs, tablets, and smartphones.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The instructor avoided the use of pop-up screens, moving text, large images, and long headings/labels for general course content on main pages. • Content did not require excessive scrolling (especially horizontal scrolling) to view. • Images and text in the main content body adjusted automatically to the width of viewer screens or were maximum 600px in length.



Section 10 Mobile Design Readiness Objectives	Section 10 Mobile Design Readiness Examples
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller images that allowed content to load quickly were used to convey essential information. • Images formats were .jpg, .png, or .gif. • Text was clear and labels were short. • Fonts were large enough to be read easily – at least 14 pt. • Content items normally clickable with a mouse were also tappable.
<p>10.2 Audio and video content displayed easily on multiple platforms such as PCs, tablets, and smartphones</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio and video clips were each 15 minutes or less. • Audio/video content was in a mobile-friendly format such as MP3 or MP4 or was linked to YouTube. • Video resolution was 480x320 for phones and 640x480 for tablets. Video presets allowed for use on mobile platforms.
<p>10.3 The number of steps users had to take in order to reach primary content was minimized.</p>	<p>Primary course content, activities, and assessments were at most two clicks away from the course landing page.</p>
<p>10.4 The visibility of content not directly applicable to student learning outcomes was minimized.</p>	<p>Supplemental resources and optional content were clearly labeled as such and placed at the bottom of course pages.</p>