

# Raising Expectations for Online Course Design:

The Adoption of the  
Quality Matters Standard at SLCC



# Where did QM come from?

- ▶ **1999** - Initiated by the Maryland Online Consortium (MOL)
- ▶ **2003** – MOL receives a grant from the U.S. Department of Education
- ▶ **2003-2006** – Research and development of the rubric and the review process
- ▶ **Today** – 1000+ institutions are subscribers, 5000+ online courses have been QM-certified

# QM Components

- ▶ Rubric
- ▶ Course Review Process
- ▶ Course Review Management System
- ▶ Professional Development

# Important Things to Remember

- ▶ The QM Rubric and Materials are licensed
- ▶ Sharing limitations
- ▶ Confidentiality
- ▶ Rubric is continually updated according to current research (new version every three years)
- ▶ Focus is on design, not delivery (not an evaluation of faculty)

# Benefits of QM to Students

All standards are based on research that shows increased:

- ▶ Student Satisfaction
- ▶ Student Retention
- ▶ Student Completion
- ▶ Student Success

# 8 General Standards

- ▶ The Course Overview and Introduction
- ▶ Learning Objectives (Competencies)
- ▶ Assessment and Measurement
- ▶ Instructional Materials
- ▶ Course Activities and Learner Interaction
- ▶ Course Technology
- ▶ Learner Support
- ▶ Accessibility and Usability

# 43 Specific Standards


**QUALITY MATTERS**  
**Standards from the QM Higher Education Rubric, Fifth Edition**  
 For more information visit [www.qualitymatters.org](http://www.qualitymatters.org) or email [info@qualitymatters.org](mailto:info@qualitymatters.org)

Standards	Points	
<b>Course Overview Introduction</b>	1.1 Instructions make clear how to get started and where to find various course components.	3
	1.2 Learners are introduced to the purpose and structure of the course.	3
	1.3 Etiquette expectations (sometimes called "netiquette") for online discussions, email, and other forms of communication are clearly stated.	2
	1.4 Course and/or institutional policies with which the learner is expected to comply are clearly stated, or a link to current policies is provided.	2
	1.5 Minimum technology requirements are clearly stated and instructions for use provided.	2
	1.6 Prerequisite knowledge in the discipline and/or any required competencies are clearly stated.	1
	1.7 Minimum technical skills expected of the learner are clearly stated.	1
	1.8 The self-introduction by the instructor is appropriate and is available online.	1
	1.9 Learners are asked to introduce themselves to the class.	1
<b>Learning Objectives (Competencies)</b>	2.1 The course learning objectives, or course/program competencies, describe outcomes that are measurable.	3
	2.2 The module/unit learning objectives or competencies describe outcomes that are measurable and consistent with the course-level objectives or competencies.	3
	2.3 All learning objectives or competencies are stated clearly and written from the learner's perspective.	3
	2.4 The relationship between learning objectives or competencies and course activities is clearly stated.	3
	2.5 The learning objectives or competencies are suited to the level of the course.	3
<b>Assessment and Measurement</b>	3.1 The assessments measure the stated learning objectives or competencies.	3
	3.2 The course grading policy is stated clearly.	3
	3.3 Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of learners' work and are tied to the course grading policy.	3
	3.4 The assessment instruments selected are sequenced, varied, and suited to the learner work being assessed.	2
	3.5 The course provides learners with multiple opportunities to track their learning progress.	2
<b>Instructional Materials</b>	4.1 The instructional materials contribute to the achievement of the stated course and module/unit learning objectives or competencies.	3
	4.2 Both the purpose of instructional materials and how the materials are to be used for learning activities are clearly explained.	3
	4.3 All instructional materials used in the course are appropriately cited.	2
	4.4 The instructional materials are current.	2
	4.5 A variety of instructional materials is used in the course.	2
	4.6 The distinction between required and optional materials is clearly explained.	1
<b>Course Activities and Learner Interaction</b>	5.1 The learning activities promote the achievement of the stated learning objectives or competencies.	3
	5.2 Learning activities provide opportunities for interaction that support active learning.	3
	5.3 The instructor's plan for classroom response time and feedback on assignments is clearly stated.	3
	5.4 The requirements for learner interaction are clearly stated.	2
<b>Course Technology</b>	6.1 The tools used in the course support the learning objectives and competencies.	3
	6.2 Course tools promote learner engagement and active learning.	3
	6.3 Technologies required in the course are readily obtainable.	2
	6.4 The course technologies are current.	1
	6.5 Links are provided to privacy policies for all external tools required in the course.	1
<b>Learner Support</b>	7.1 The course instructions articulate or link to a clear description of the technical support offered and how to obtain it.	3
	7.2 Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's accessibility policies and services.	3
	7.3 Course instructions articulate or link to an explanation of how the institution's academic support services and resources can help learners succeed in the course and how learners can obtain them.	2
	7.4 Course instructions articulate or link to an explanation of how the institution's student services and resources can help learners succeed and how learners can obtain them.	1
<b>Accessibility and Usability</b>	8.1 Course navigation facilitates ease of use.	3
	8.2 Information is provided about the accessibility of all technologies required in the course.	3
	8.3 The course provides alternative means of access to course materials in formats that meet the needs of diverse learners.	2
	8.4 The course design facilitates readability.	2
	8.5 Course multimedia facilitate ease of use.	2

# Alignment

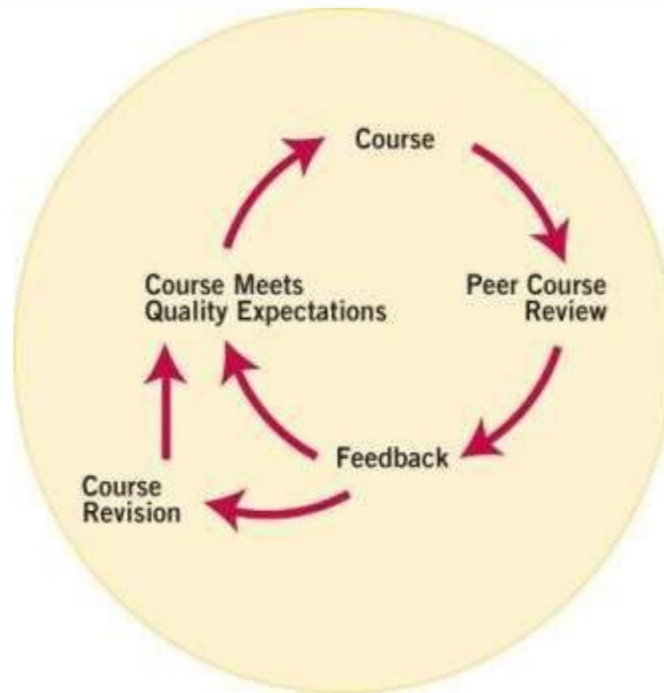


Submitted by James Fowlkes  
& Brenda Boyd



# QM Review Process

- ▶ Iterative, not punitive



# QM Professional Development

- ▶ Extensive catalog of online workshops
- ▶ Free monthly webinars
- ▶ Newsletter
- ▶ Annual conference

# Why QM at SLCC?

QUALITY MATTERS

QM

Salt Lake  
Community  
College 

# Benefits of QM at SLCC

- ▶ Nationally-recognized standard (easy buy-in)
- ▶ Rubric is updated regularly (saves time)
- ▶ CRMS is a vast improvement on our old paper-based system
- ▶ Confidentiality of informal self-reviews
- ▶ Professional development opportunities (for both faculty and staff)
- ▶ Significant improvements to course quality and consistency

# SLCC Metrics

- ▶ 38 instructors and 28 eLearning team members have completed the one-day introductory training
- ▶ 8 instructors and 6 eLearning team members have completed the two-week course reviewer training
- ▶ 4 IDs are certified QM facilitators
- ▶ 1 certified QM Coordinator
- ▶ 16 formal course reviews with 1 ID and 2 faculty peer reviewers (and many more informal reviews)

# Plans for QM Implementation

- ▶ **2017-2018** - Preliminary reviews
- ▶ **2018-2021** - Formal reviews
  - Courses that don't meet the standard (and can't be remediated quickly) will not be taught.
  - 10% of full-time faculty trained as peer reviewers



How do you ensure  
quality course design  
at your institution?