

Minimum Standards for Engagement in Online Courses

Goal: Literature about online course design and learning theory suggest that online courses facilitate student learning when they are designed as a series of modules or units with clearly defined objectives. Mastery of a learning objective is achieved by providing students with rigorous content accompanied by reinforcement activities. Assessments indicate if mastery has been achieved. The course textbook is aligned with course modules through a course calendar or schedule. Essentially, the class is able to operate independently of a specific text.

In an effort to increase the quality of Minot State's online courses, the standards below will be incorporated in all online courses and will be part of the beta test process. Implementation will take place in several ways: 1) during the new course development process, 2) during the master course review process, 3) during the department peer review process and 4) during a scheduled timeframe set for courses that did not complete a new course, master course, or department peer review process.

Standard 1:

Online courses are designed in a modular-like format that will include modules or units -> learning objectives -> lessons or major points.

- It is recommended that each module has at least one ungraded reinforcement activity (e.g.) flash cards, self-tests, puzzles.
- It is required that modules have a minimum of one graded assessment (e.g.) quiz, discussion, paper.

Standard 2:

Module content goes beyond text-based information and includes multiple resources to assist students in mastering department mandated learning objectives.

Standard 3:

Rich media is used to support **most** modules (e.g.) videos, narrated PowerPoint presentations, YuJa lecture capture, audio (mp3) files of text-based content, Smartboard demonstrations, podcasts, simulations, course-related photos and graphics.

Standard 4:

Minimum of one major engagement activities per course (e.g.) group projects, instructor-led focused discussion, community and civic projects, student presentations. This standard could be met with two "minor" engagement activities if this is a better fit for the curriculum.