

# Summer Online Course Checklist

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## Overview

**Purpose:** After working through this checklist, instructors will have a reasonably designed summer course.

**Ask:** five years from now, what do I want my students to remember and use that they learned in my course? This is your overall goal.

## Objectives

- Establish objectives for your course.
- Try to group your objectives to narrow them down to 3-5 objectives.
- Be sure the objectives are worded from the student's perspective and contain measurable verbs.

### Examples

Starter objective: By the end of this course, students will understand the importance of primary research in written work.

Polished objective: By the end of this course, students will be able to conduct primary research and use it appropriately in their written work.

## Assessments

- Using your objectives as a checklist, match each objective with an assessment to be sure that your course includes at least one assessment for each objective.
- As you are matching your objectives to assessments, write that information down for your students. This practice lets students know how they will progress through the course and shows them why your assessments—and their academic integrity—matter.

### Examples

Prompt (many more instructions included, but eliminated here for brevity):

Summary of "Sleep deprivation and the development of leadership and need for cognition during the college years."

Skills assessed (course objectives 1 & 2): Identifying the 11 article parts; summarizing in your own words.

- Identify criteria with assignment Rubrics/Metrics that show success and areas for improvement.
- Clearly identify the criteria for success on each assessment.

## Assignments

For each assignment, ask yourself the following questions:

- Do I want to review all of these assignments?
- Are these assignments items that I look forward to receiving from my students? If not, what product could I ask for that would be interesting or exciting for my students to use to practice as they progress toward objectives? Assign that product instead.
- Can my students submit these assignments online?
- Is this essential to student progress in the course?
- Toward which objective does this assignment move my students? (Be sure to tell students which objective the assignment will help them to meet.)
- Can I provide opportunities for students to check their own work against a standard?
- Will I allow multiple attempts on the assignment? How many?
- Do my students have to achieve a certain mark on the assignment before they can progress to the next section of the module? If so, have I set the next section up with adaptive release?

# Review

At this point, the course objectives, assessments, and assignments should align through rubrics, much like peas align in a pod.

## Class Sessions/Modules/Weeks

As you design each course session/module/week, focus on four activities for each session/module/week.

- Something to read. Make these short if possible. Ensure that they are accessible. Use Open Educational Resources or materials that students can retrieve virtually from the SU Libraries. If you need support, contact your library liaison.
- Something to view/hear. Make these short if possible also. Online attention span is about 10-15 minutes. Again, ensure that these materials are accessible.
  - If you show a film, check for accessibility features like captioning or a transcript. Provide viewing instructions. What should students look for? What should students listen for?
  - If you plan to lecture, keep it at 10-15 minutes. Lecture in chunks. Provide notes or slides. Consider the possibility that students may decide to listen at higher speeds than you recorded. After each "chunk," provide some ways for students to check in to see if they have gathered the most important information.
- Something to discuss. When students use new information or skills, they are more likely to encode that new information in their minds and to remember it. Discussion can help them to do exactly that. As you set up discussions, keep in mind the following best practices:
  - Discussion forums can be used to help to create classroom community. If you start online, you'll need to build community among your students.
  - Use a prompt. What should students discuss each time? Why?
  - Set parameters. How long should each post be? Does each student have to start a discussion? Does each student have to respond to one peer? Two peers? What should responses look like? Will the responses be complete sentences? Do students need to cite sources in their responses? How should they do that?
  - Don't let discussions go on too long. Reading pages of comments on an initial post can make the mind wander, which doesn't achieve the objective. After 12 students have responded, provide a new prompt or have students suggest a new direction for the discussion or a new prompt
  - Prohibit *ad hominem* attacks.
  - Set thresholds for the kinds of writing you will accept. Will you allow text abbreviations, for example? GIFs? Emojis?
  - Provide a "muddiest point" forum for students as well so that they have a place to indicate their learning challenge when they get stumped. Encourage students to answer their peers' questions. Monitor the forum so that misinformation does not circulate.
- Something to do. Help students know how to use the information that you're giving them along the way. Consider some of these ideas as a way to see how students are processing the information:
  - Concept map
  - Reflection journal entry
  - 3-2-1 exercise
  - Memory matrix
  - One sentence summary
  - Directed paraphrasing
  - Chain notes among group members or the entire class
  - Student-developed test questions
  - Short article
  - Tweet the point
  - Polls
  - Create a review slide

Suggestions and directions can be found [here](#) and [here](#).