	Standards	**Points**
Course Overview and Introduction	**I.1 Instructions make clear how to get started and where to find various course components.** Instructions provide a general course overview, guide the students to explore the course Website, and indicate what to do first. This may be found in the syllabus or an introduction. Students should be directed to this information in the beginning of the course. **Examples:** • "Read Me First" or "Start Here" button or icon on the course home page, linking students to start-up information • "Getting Started" component • Course "tour" • For hybrid courses, the introductory information clearly states when and where students should participate each week • Table or diagram depicting layout and/or relationship between online and hybrid portions of a hybrid course	3
	I.2 A statement introduces the student to the purpose of the course and to its components; in the case of a hybrid course, the statement clarifies the relationship between the face-to-face and online components. The instructor's statement provides information on course structure, including schedule, communication modes, types of activities, and assessments. These may be found in the syllabus or in an introduction. **Examples:** • Course schedule (self-paced, following a set calendar, etc.) • Course sequencing, such as a linear or random order • Types of activities the student will be required to complete (written assignments, online self-tests, participation in the discussion board, group work, etc.) • Course calendar with assignment, activity, and test due dates. • Preferred mode of communication with the instructor (email, discussion board, etc.) • Preferred mode of communication with other students • Testing procedures (online, proctored, etc.)	3
	I.3 Netiquette expectations for online discussions, email, journals/blogs and other forms of communication are clearly stated. Expectations of student conduct in online and/or hybrid environments are clearly stated. The substance of these expectations is not to be evaluated. **Examples:** • "Speaking style" requirements (e.g., use of correct English required as opposed to net acronyms) • Spelling and grammar expectations, if any • Rules of conduct for classroom participation • Rules of conduct for participating in the discussion board • Rules of conduct for email content • Expectations for the tone and civility used in communicating with fellow students and the faculty member, whether the communication be via electronic means, telephone, or face-to-face	2

	I.4 The self-introduction by the instructor is appropriate and available online. The introduction should create a sense of connection between instructor and students and present the instructor as professional, as well as approachable. • Faculty contact information is complete and accurate. • Faculty office hours are provided and up-to-date. • Information on teaching experience/philosophy • Personal information such as hobbies, family, travel experience, if desired • A photo or welcome video	1
	I.5 Students are asked to introduce themselves to the class. A venue is provided for students to introduce themselves to classmates, fostering a sense of community. Students may be asked to answer specific questions or decide for themselves what information to include. Instructors may model the format by introducing themselves. • Journals • Blogs • Discussion Board	1

	I.6 Minimum technical skills, student preparation, and, if applicable, prerequisite knowledge in the discipline expected of the student are clearly stated.
	
	Explanations of technical requirements, technical skills, and prerequisite knowledge and skills may be found within the course, in documents linked to the course, or in supporting material not on the course site. Look for a link to that content and/or a reminder of it for the entering student.
	• **Technology requirements may include information on:**
	    o Hardware
	    o Software and plug-ins
	    o ISP requirements
	• **Examples of technology skills may include the capability to:**
	    o Use email with attachments
	    o Save files in commonly used word processing program formats (e.g. MS Word)
	    o Use other course-specific programs
	• **Discipline knowledge prerequisites should include academic course prerequisites.**
		1

Learning Objectives	**II.1 The course learning objectives describe outcomes that are measurable.** Measurable course learning objectives precisely describe what students are to gain from instruction, and then guide instructors to accurately assess student accomplishment. Objectives should describe student performance in specific, observable terms. If this specificity is not possible (e.g., internal cognition, affective changes), check for clear indications that the learning objective is meaningfully assessed. (Learning objectives may be referred to as learning outcomes.) **Examples of measurable objectives:** • Select appropriate tax strategies for different financial and personal situations. • Develop a comprehensive, individualized wellness action program focused on overcoming a sedentary life-style. • Describe the relationship between the components of an ecosystem.	3

Special situations: In some cases, the course objectives are institutionally mandated and the individual instructor does not have the authority to change them. If the institutionally-mandated learning objectives are not measurable, then please be sure to make note of this in the "comments" box. If the course objectives are institutionally mandated, then the reviewer may need to consider Standard II.1 in conjunction with Standard II.2 as follows:

Standard II.1 is considered as being MET under the following circumstances:
- the course objectives are measurable, whether set by the institution or faculty member
- the institutionally-mandated course objectives are not measurable, but the faculty-driven module/unit-level objectives are

Standard II.1 is NOT MET under the following circumstances:
- there are no course-level objectives
- there are course-level objectives that are not institutionally-mandated and that are not measurable
- the institutionally-mandated course-level objectives are not measurable, and the faculty-driven module/unit objectives are either not measurable or are not present
- there are no institutionally-mandated course-level objectives are not measurable, and the faculty-driven module/unit objectives are either not measurable or are not present

II.2 The module/unit learning objectives describe outcomes that are measurable and consistent with the course-level objectives.	3

Measurable module or unit-level learning objectives are important. They precisely describe the specific competencies, skills, and knowledge that students should be able to master and demonstrate at regular intervals throughout the course. They provide students with greater focus and clarity of learning expectations and outcomes on a weekly, modular, or unit basis.

Module- or unit-level objectives may be written by the instructor or come from the textbook. Module/unit learning objectives guide instructors to accurately assess student accomplishment. Objectives should describe student performance in specific, observable terms. (Learning objectives may be referred to as learning outcomes.)

The module/unit-level objectives should be consistent with the course-level objectives.

The module/unit objectives may either be implicitly or explicitly consistent with the course-level objectives. For example, the module/unit objective "Students will write sentences that demonstrate correct usage of commas, semicolons, and periods." is implicitly consistent with the course objective "Students will demonstrate correct writing skills."

It is especially important to assess the presence of measurable course and module/ unit-level learning objectives, as their effect on course design and the review process is wide-ranging.

II.3 All learning objectives are stated clearly and written from the students' perspective.	2
The learning objectives are written in a way that allows students to easily grasp their meaning and the learning outcomes expected of them. The use of educational jargon, confusing terms, unnecessarily complex language, and puzzling syntax is avoided. Consider both the course and module/unit learning objectives in assessment of this standard.	
II.4 Instructions to students on how to meet the learning objectives are adequate and stated clearly.	2
Instructions may take various forms and may appear at different levels within the course, such as module-based or weekly assignments. Instructions are stated clearly and completely. Consider both the course and module/unit learning objectives in assessment of this standard. **Examples:** ● Module-based or weekly assignment pages in narrative, bulleted list, or chart form indicate a list of steps that guide the student to meet learning objectives for each week. ● Information indicates which learning activities, resources, assignments, and assessments support the learning objectives.	
II.5 The learning objectives are appropriately designed for the level of the course.	2
Examine the course and module/unit learning objectives as a whole for all three types of skill. All three types of skills need not be present in both the course-level and module/unit-level objectives, nor in every single objective. Content mastery should be appropriate for the type and level of the course. Decisions on this aspect of the standard may require discussion with a subject matter expert. Reviewers should consult with the SME (subject matter expert). Core learning skills, including critical thinking, are typically those that transcend an individual course and are integrated across the curriculum. Core learning skills are sometimes called "core competencies." ***Core learning skills may include:*** ● Written and oral communication skills ● Ability to compute and process mathematical information ● Manipulation and organization of information in various ways or using different tools ● Understanding what one knows and how one knows it, and also understanding what one does not know and what one needs to find it out	

Critical thinking skills may include the ability to:
- Distinguish between fact and fiction
- Distinguish between primary and secondary sources
- Identify bias and stereotypes
- Evaluate information sources for point of view, accuracy, usefulness, timeliness, etc.
- Recognize deceptive arguments

Upper-division and graduate course objectives might include:
- Mastery of the professional standards of the field
- Ability to communicate using the specialized terminology and methods of discourse appropriate to the field

Assessment and Measurement

III.1 The types of assessments selected measure the stated learning objectives and are consistent with course activities and resources.   3

Assessments and learning objectives align in a clear and direct way. The assessment formats provide a reasonable way to measure the stated learning objectives. Consider both the course and module/unit learning objectives in your assessment of this standard. (Learning Objectives may be called learning outcomes.)

Examples of objective/assessment alignment:
- A problem analysis evaluates critical thinking skills.
- A multiple choice quiz verifies vocabulary knowledge.
- A composition assesses writing skills.

Examples of *inconsistent* objective/assessment alignment:
- The objective is to be able to "write a persuasive essay" but the assessment is a multiple choice test.
- The objective is to "demonstrate discipline-specific information literacy" and the assessment is a rubric-scored term paper, but students are not given any practice with information literacy skills on smaller assignments.

Some assessments may be geared towards meeting objectives other than those stated in the course; for example, a course may have a writing component as part of a college-wide "Writing Across the Curriculum" requirement. In that case, the reviewer should suggest that the appropriate objectives also be stated within the course.

Special situations: In some cases, the course objectives are institutionally mandated and the individual instructor does not have the authority to change them. For such cases, consider instead the module/unit-level objectives to assess and score Standard III.1.

III.2 The course grading policy is stated clearly.   3

A clear explanation indicates how the course grade is computed. The points, percentages, and weights for each component of the course grade are clearly stated. The relationship(s) between points, percentages, weights, and letter grades are explained. The instructor's policy on late submissions is clearly stated.

Review the clarity of the explanation and presentation to the student, not the simplicity or complexity of a given grading system itself. A relatively complex grading system can still be unambiguous and easy to understand.

Examples:
- A list of all activities, tests, etc. that will affect the students' grade
- An explanation of the relationship between the final course letter grade and the student's accumulated points and/or percentages
- If points and percentages are used, an explanation of the relationship between these two

	III.3 Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of students' work and participation. Students are provided with a clear and meaningful description of the criteria that will be used to assess and evaluate their work and participation in the course. These criteria are stated up-front at the beginning of the course. This description and/or statement of criteria provides students with clear guidance as to the expectations and required components of work and participation. These criteria give students a clear idea of how to strive for a particular grade on an assignment or activity. **Examples:** • Evidence that the instructor has stated the criteria for evaluation of students' paper and assignments, such as rubrics or a list of criteria with associated point values • A description of the how students' participation in discussions will be graded, including the number of required postings per week; the criteria for evaluating the originality and quality of students' comments; responsiveness to other students' comments; and grade credit they can expect for various levels of performance	3
	III.4 The assessment instruments selected are sequenced, varied, and appropriate to the content being assessed. Multiple assessment strategies are used in both the online and face-to-face settings, and they are appropriate to the content of and format in which they are implemented. Assessments are varied to provide multiple avenues for the demonstration of mastery, and to accommodate multiple learning styles. The assessments are appropriately sequenced to facilitate the learning process and to build on previously mastered knowledge and skills gained in this and prerequisite courses. Assessments are paced to give students adequate time to achieve mastery and complete the work in a thoughtful manner. **Examples that DO meet the standard:** • A series of assessments that progress from the definition of terms, to a short paper explaining the relationship between various theoretical concepts, to a term paper that includes the application of theoretical concepts and critical analysis of a journal article • Multiple types of assessment which enable the instructor to become familiar with an individual student's work and which discourage "proxy cheating" (someone other than the student completing and submitting work) • A series of assessments evenly spaced every 2 weeks throughout the course **Examples that do NOT meet the standard:** • The entire set of assessments consists of 5 multiple choice tests. • The first assessment requires students to locate research materials, while library research skills and methods aren't covered until the third assessment. • No assessments during the first 12 weeks of the semester, with an essay, term paper, and final exam due during the 13th, 14th, and 15th weeks, respectively	2

	Circumstances affecting some graduate courses: The grade may be entirely based on a major assignment due at the end of the term. In this case, there should be benchmarks for progress during the term, with feedback from the instructor. **Examples might include** : • Submission of a bibliography • Submission of an outline or project plan • Submission of a précis of the paper or project • Submission of one or more preliminary drafts.	
	III.5 "Self-check" or practice assignments are provided, with timely feedback to students. Students have ample opportunity to measure their own learning progress. Students learn more effectively if they receive frequent, meaningful, and timely feedback. This feedback may come from the instructor directly, from assignments and assessments that have feedback built into them, or even from other students. This standard will enforce a more formative assessment and may have less or no weight in course grading policy. Look for examples of "self-check" quizzes and activities, as well as other types of practice opportunities that provide timely feedback. These types of assignments should be voluntary or allow multiple attempts. **Examples:** • Writing assignments that allow for the submission of a draft for instructor comment and suggestions for improvement • Self-mastery tests and quizzes that include informative feedback with each answer choice • Interactive games and simulation that have feedback built in • Practice quizzes and/or written assignments • Peer reviews • Model papers or essays provided for students' viewing • Sample answers or answer keys provided for students' viewing	2
Resources and Materials	**IV.1 The instructional materials contribute to the achievement of the stated course and module/unit learning objectives.** Course materials, resources, and learning objectives align in a clear and direct way. The course materials and resources provide a reasonable base to achieve the stated learning objectives. As a reviewer, consider both the course and module/unit learning objectives in your assessment of this standard. (learning objectives may be called learning outcomes.) Decisions on this standard may be particularly difficult for individuals whose expertise is not in the course discipline. Consult with a subject matter expert and use common sense to determine if the content is appropriate enough to support the learning objectives. **Special situations:** In some cases, the course objectives are institutionally mandated and the individual instructor does not have the authority to change them. For such cases, consider instead the module/unit-level objectives to assess and score Standard IV.1.	3

IV.2 The relationship between the instructional materials and the learning activities is clearly explained to the student.	3

> Students can easily determine the purpose of all content, materials, resources, technologies, and instructional methods used in the course and how each will help them achieve the stated learning objectives. It is clearly stated which materials are required and which are recommended resources.
>
> For example, a course may be richly garnished with external links to Internet resources, but it may not be clear whether those resources are for background information or additional personal enrichment or if they are required for an assignment.
>
> **Examples:**
> - Links to external websites indicate the purpose of the links or are completely self-evident.
> - The function of animated games or exercises is clearly explained or is completely self-evident.
>
> If various instructional materials (books, manuals, videos, CD ROMs, computer software, etc.) are used in the course, the purpose of their use and relationship to one another should be clearly explained to students. Reviewers should determine if such diversely formatted course materials are integrated well enough to be useful to the uninitiated student. The integration of these materials may be considered both physically and contextually. Students should clearly understand the learning objectives associated with the materials.
>
> For example, a course requires students to use the following materials: a textbook divided into chapters, video segments ordered by topics, a website organized around specific skills, and a tutorial CD-ROM that has an opening menu consisting of "practice quizzes," "images," and "audio examples." Consider whether it would be clear to students the order in which they should approach these varied materials, how each is related to the core content and learning objectives, and how the materials are related to one another.
>
> In some advanced undergraduate and graduate courses, in which students are expected to find their own learning materials, the instructor should post guidelines that assist the student in identifying relevant materials and distinguish between core and supplementary materials and between scholarly and non-scholarly sources for academic writing. Reviewers should determine whether these guidelines satisfy the standard.
>
> Decisions on this standard may be difficult for individual reviewers whose expertise is not in the course discipline. Reviewers should consult with the team SME (subject matter expert) and use common sense to determine if the materials are appropriate to this course.

IV.3 The instructional materials have sufficient breadth, depth, and currency for the student to learn the subject.	2

> **Breadth:** The course materials are robust and create a rich learning environment for students. Instructors should provide meaningful content in a variety of ways, including the textbook, PowerPoint presentations, websites, lecture notes, outlines, and multimedia.
>
> **Depth:** The level of detail in supporting materials is appropriate for the level of the course, and provides sufficient depth for students to achieve the learning objectives. For example, an upper-level capstone course should include significantly deeper materials than those required for an introductory general education course.

	Currency: The materials represent up-to-date thinking and practice in the discipline. Some examples: an introductory computer course should include recent trends such as podcasting; an English writing course should discuss the purpose of Internet research; a chemistry course should include computerized models to demonstrate chemical structure and reactions. Decisions on this standard may be particularly difficult for individuals whose expertise is not in the course discipline. Consult with a subject matter expert and use common sense to determine if the content is robust enough to support the course.	
	IV.4 All resources and materials used in the course are appropriately cited.	1
	Materials created by the instructor and those borrowed from other sources are distinctly identified. Text, images, graphic materials, tables, videos, audios, websites, and other forms of multimedia are appropriately referenced according to the institution's copyright and intellectual property policy. Courses that use an e-pack or course cartridge may provide a blanket statement acknowledging that a significant portion of the course materials came from the publisher rather than include individual citations for each instance of publisher materials.	
Learner Engagement	**V.1 Learning activities foster instructor-student, content-student, and if appropriate to the course, student-student interaction.**	3
	All courses should include interaction between the instructor and the students and between the students and the content. The degree and type of student-to-student interaction may vary with the discipline and the level of the course. **Examples of learning activities that foster the following types of interaction:** • Instructor - student (Required): Discussion and responses; feedback on project assignments; evidence of one-to-one communication, etc. • Student - content (Required): Essays, term papers, group projects, etc. based on readings, videos, and other course content; self-assessment exercises; group work products, etc. • Student – student (if course appropriate): Self-introduction exercise; group discussion postings; group projects; peer critiques, etc. If needed, ask the instructor if student-student interaction is appropriate for this course. If he/she indicates that such interaction is appropriate, then consider this in deciding if the standard is met. If he/she indicates that such interaction is not appropriate, then focus only on instructor-student and student-content interaction to decide whether this standard has been met. When appropriate, include recommendations and suggestions for including student-student interaction in this course.	
	V.2 Clear standards are set for instructor responsiveness and availability (turn-around time for email, grade posting, etc.)	3
	Information clearly indicates how quickly the instructor will respond, when feedback will be provided, and when the instructor is available to meet. Information clearly indicates instructor response time for key events and interactions, including e-mail turnaround time, time required for grade postings, discussion postings, etc. Standards also include instructor availability, including e-mail response time, degree of participation in discussions, and availability via other media (phone, in-person) if applicable.	

	This information could be included in the syllabus or an instructor's introductory statement. This standard does not prescribe what that response time and availability should be.	
	V.3 The requirements for student interaction are clearly articulated. A clear statement of the instructor's expectations with regard to student participation in required course interactions (frequency, length, timeliness, etc.) helps students plan and manage their class participation and provides a basis for the instructor to evaluate student participation. The more specifically these expectations are defined, the easier it is for the learner to meet and adhere to the standards. Typically, general statements of student performance expectations are included in the course information page or syllabus. These general requirements may specify the nature of the required participation and expectations for frequency and quality of the student's interactions. More specific task-related performance expectations may be included in the individual task description. **Example:** For class discussions, the instructor may share with students a rubric detailing how student interactions are evaluated, including reading and responding to the instructor's and classmates' posts.	2
	VI.1 The tools and media support the learning objectives, and are appropriately chosen to deliver course content and support student engagement and active learning. Tools and media used in the course support related learning objectives, and are contextually integrated with texts and lesson assignments. It is clearly stated how the tools and media support the assignments and how they support the learning objectives. Technology is not used simply for the sake of using technology. For example, a course might require viewing video materials, but it may not be clear how the video materials illustrate or support any learning objective. Examples of tools include discussion boards, chat rooms, gradebook, whiteboard, etc. Examples of media include video, audio, animations, simulations, etc. Media are not required for this standard to be met. Rather, if media are used they should support the learning objectives and be contextually integrated. Examples of media include video, audio, podcasting, gaming, animations, simulations, wikis, blogs, virtual classrooms (for example, Elluminate, Second Life), webinars, etc. Further, tools and media used in the course help students actively engage in the learning process, rather than passively "absorbing" information. Selected tools and media should encourage the student to reflectively grasp and respond to the deeper learning process. Types of learner engagement include learner-content, learner-instructor, and learner-learner. Interactions can provide opportunities to increase learners' comfort levels, but the goal should be to facilitate the broadest and deepest learner engagement possible in the course.	3

Course Technology	**Examples:** • Automated "self-check" exercises requiring student response • Animations, simulations, and games that require student input • Learning management system functions that provide competence/timed release functions • Software that tracks student interaction and progress • Discussion tools with automatic notification or a "read/unread" tracking feature • Interactive, real-time software, such as real-time collaborative tools, webinars, and virtual worlds • Interactive, constructivist software, such as shared documents or wikis. **Special situations:** In some cases, the course objectives are institutionally mandated and the individual instructor does not have the authority to change them. For such cases, consider instead the module/unit-level objectives to assess and score.	
	VI.2 Navigation throughout the online components of the course is logical, consistent, and efficient. Navigation refers to the process of planning, recording, and controlling the movement of a learner from one place to another in the online course. **Considerations for effective navigation devices within the online course may include:** • Adherence to accepted web standards-of-function for hypertext links, buttons, and windows • Provisions for intuitive understanding of function when non-standard navigation devices are employed • Consistent use of navigation devices Some navigation devices--next and previous links, for example--are provided by the learning management system used for course delivery and cannot be modified. Other navigation devices--hypertext links, icons, and window functions, for example--may be within the control of the course designer. It can be challenging for the reviewer to determine the locus of control for the various course navigation devices used to move the learner from one place to another in the course.	3
	VI.3 The course components are compatible with current standards for delivery modes and course design takes full advantage of available tools and media. Assessments, activities, instructional materials, tools, and media make use of the available technologies and meet current standards for widespread accessibility. Innovative technologies continuously appear on the market, and course technology should be current and reflect the evolution of the field of online education. As new versions of a course management system are released, instructors should integrate the new features into their courses to ensure that students have the most effective and efficient access to the courses. Courses not recently developed may need to be updated. As a reviewer, keep in mind that the tools and media available to an instructor may vary greatly and are sometimes limited by the access and support provided by the institution. Be sure to check the Instructor Worksheet for information relevant to this standard.	2

	Examples of current technologies that will make the course content and activities more accessible: • Using compressed files to reduce file downloading time • Delivering audio files in a common file type such as Windows Media or RealPlayer • Using podcasts instead of audiocassettes • Using CDs and DVDs rather than VHS tapes For this standard, the term "technologies" may cover a range of plug-ins such as Acrobat Reader, media players, etc. In addition, courses may require special software packages (spreadsheets, math calculators, etc.). Clear instructions list the required software and plug-ins, along with instructions for obtaining and installing these items.	
Learner Support	**VII.1 Courses are effectively supported for students through fully-accessible modes of delivery, resources and student support.** This standard is met through inclusion of the university-provided Student Resources site. If this link is present in the course menu, 4 points are awarded. If this link has been removed from the course menu, then the following standards must be assessed at 1 point each. • The course instructions articulate or link to clear description of the technical support offered. • Course instructions articulate or link to an explanation of how the institution's academic support system can assist the student in effectively using the resources provided, including disability services. • Course instructions articulate or link to an explanation of how the institution's student support services can help students reach their educational goals. • Course instructions answer basic questions related to research, writing, technology, etc., or link to tutorials or other resources that provide the information.	4 (1 pt. each)
Accessibility	**VIII.1 Course pages and course materials provide equivalent alternatives to auditory and visual content.** When necessary, alternative means of access to course information are provided for the vision- or hearing-impaired student, such as equivalent textual representations of images, audio, animations, and video in the course website. **Examples:** • An audio lecture has a text transcript available. • A video clip, image, or animation is accompanied by a text transcript. • Text provides an alternative to non-text content in web pages. It is especially helpful for people who are blind and rely on a screen reader to have the content of the website read to them. • Videos and live audio have captions and a transcript. With archived audio, a transcription may be sufficient. • Form elements (text field, checkbox, dropdown list, etc.) have a label associated to the correct form element using the <label> tag. The user can submit the form and recover from any errors, such as the failure to fill in all required fields.	1

	VIII.2 Course pages have links that are self-describing and meaningful.	1
	The course provides Internet links that include useful descriptions of what students will find at the linked sites. These descriptions enable vision-impaired students to use screen reader software to understand links. In addition, instructors provide directions that clearly direct students to the appropriate sub-pages within an external website. **Examples:** • All file names and web hyperlinks have meaningful names. For instance, the link to take a quiz should say "Take Quiz 1," not "Click Here." • Icons used as links should also have HTML tags or an accompanying text link. • To facilitate access to Internet sites by screen readers, links are arranged in numeric or alphabetic order, rather than simple bulleted form.	
	VIII.3 The course ensures screen readability.	1
	The course employs appropriate font, color, and spacing to facilitate readability and minimize distractions for the student. Presenting information in text format is generally acceptable because screen reader software (used by the vision-impaired) can read text. **When reviewers note readability problems, they should refer the course developer(s) to appropriate tips from the list below:** • When color-coding is used, additional means to communicate information, such as bold or italics, are included in conjunction with color-coding. • Sufficient contrast is used in the font and background colors • Text size is consistent with typical View,Text, and Size settings. • Course pages provide an alternate, non-color-coded format. • Formatting and color coding are used to serve specific instructional purposes. For example, format and color are used purposefully to communicate key points, group like items, emphasize relevant relationships, etc. • Tables are used online for layout and to organize data. Tables that are used to organize tabular data should have appropriate table headers (the \<th\> element). Data cells should be associated with their appropriate headers, making it easier for screen reader users to navigate and understand the data table. • PDF documents and other non-HTML content should be as accessible as possible. If they are not, using HTML could be considered. PDF documents could also include a series of tags to make them more accessible. A tagged PDF file looks the same but is likely to be more accessible to a person using a screen reader. • A method that allows users to skip navigation or other elements that repeat on every page is provided. This shortcut is usually accomplished by providing a "Skip to Content," "Skip to Main Content," or "Skip Navigation" link at the top of the page that goes to the main content of the page. • Ensure JavaScript event handlers are device-independent (e.g., they do not require the use of a mouse) and make sure that the page does not rely on JavaScript to function. • HTML-compliant and -accessible pages are more robust and provide search engine optimization. Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) allow separation of content from presentation and thus provide more flexibility and accessibility of content. Web accessibility checkers such as Bobby or CynthiaSays may be employed by instructors to ensure compliance.	

Professional Communications	**IX.1 The face-to-face, electronic, and online course documents and course materials are developed to an expected professional level.** Documents and other course materials are delivered at a level appropriate to a university. As professional educators a standard of communications must be maintained. Written course materials must show students a level of professional communication. Documents disseminated in conjunction with a course must be devoid of common grammatical errors. **Examples of unacceptable errors:** • Misspellings • Incorrect noun-verb agreement • Ambiguous statements • Incomplete sentences	3

* Alignment

Activities and learning objectives align in a clear and direct way. The activities provide a reasonable way to measure the stated learning objectives. Consider both the course and module/unit learning objectives in your assessment of this standard. (Learning objectives may be called learning outcomes.)

Learning activities are included in both the online and face-to-face components of the course. Learning activities are varied to provide multiple avenues for reinforcement and mastery, and to accommodate multiple learning styles. Activities may include student presentations, science labs, class discussions, case studies, role playing, simulation exercise, practice quizzes, tests, etc.

Examples of *mismatches* between activities and objectives:
- The objective requires students to be able to deliver a persuasive speech, but the activities in the course do not include practice of that skill.
- The objective is "Prepare each budget within a master budget and explain their importance in the overall budgeting process." The students review information about this in their texts, observe budgets worked out by the instructor, and produce only one of the several budgets.

Special situations: In some cases, the course objectives are institutionally mandated and the individual instructor does not have the authority to change them. For such cases, consider instead the module/unit-level objectives to assess and score Standard V.1.