

Online Course Development Process Guide - Summary

STAGE ONE – PLANNING AND DESIGN

Step 1 – General Pedagogical Considerations

Step 2 – Identifying Course Objectives

Step 3 – Identifying Course Content

Step 4 – Identifying Course Components

Step 5 – Designing Course Structure

Step 6 – Designing Instructional Strategies

The end product of this stage is a draft course syllabus which includes (but not limited to) the following components:

- **list of topics to be covered**
- **student activity/assessment plan**
- **tentative course schedule**

New components to be developed for the online course will also be identified.

STAGE TWO – DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

Step 1 – Content Preparation

Step 2 – Web Page Development

Step 3 – Creating the Course under a Course Management System

Step 4 – Testing the Course

The end product of this stage is a complete online course site.

STAGE THREE – COURSE DELIVERY AND MANAGEMENT

Role of Instructional Designer – Summary

To facilitate the online course development process by providing support in all stages of development.

To promote quality and effectiveness of an online course by promoting effective online instructional design and development guidelines.

Online Course Development Process Guide

Online course development can be perceived as a three-stage process – the planning and design stage, the development and implementation stage, and the course delivery and management stage. Each stage consists of several developmental steps. The following is a description of the stages and steps. The roles of the instructional designer and other support personnel are also noted in the steps.

STAGE ONE – PLANNING AND DESIGN

Step 1 – General Pedagogical Considerations

In this beginning step, ask questions such as:

- What are the positive and negative aspects of your class?
- What instructional strategies did you use for your class? Were they effective? Will the same strategies work for online delivery?
- What would you like to do with your class? Can the new instructional media achieve it?
- What are the things that need to be done differently due to the nature of the new media?
- What is the difference between online and in-class students? How should the issue be addressed?

List goals that you would like to achieve and issues that you wish to address for your course.

[Help from Instructional Designer: Answering general questions regarding online instruction; pointing out the difference between online and on-ground instruction; providing reference resource for existing online courses and planning principles.](#)

Step 2 – Identifying Course Objectives

In this step, list the objectives of your course. The objectives could be listed as general class objectives and specific behavioral outcomes.

[Help from Instructional Designer: Providing guidelines for listing course objectives.](#)

Step 3 – Identifying Course Content

In this step, the content of the course is identified. It involves several tasks:

- Identifying the content (topics) that would be covered in the course.
- Identify textbooks and start gathering content materials and supplemental materials together (e.g., photos, graphics, print-based and Internet-based references, existing multimedia clips).
- Obtaining copyright clearance for the materials if necessary.
- Making a list of the content topics and supplemental materials that need to be developed.

[Help from Instructional Designer: Locating useful materials and Internet links.](#)

Step 4 – Identifying Course Components

In addition to the knowledge content that will be delivered to the students, identify the other components of the course that you would like to incorporate to facilitate the learning process. Some examples would be:

- A syllabus.
- An assessment component that may include student self-evaluation, quizzes, exercises, and exams.
- A communication component which may include group discussion, e-mail communication, etc.
- A record keeping component to track student progress.

[Help from Instructional Designer: Providing examples and suggestions of components that would be useful to the particular course.](#)

Step 5 – Designing Course Structure

In this step, divide content materials and course components (where appropriate) into units. Then create a course structure for content material units. The structure would map out the organization and connection for individual units. Also, in this step, map out the relationship between content units and course component units (e.g., linking a quiz to a content unit).

The organization maps for units can also be used as the organization maps for actual content files placement and storage. If the content files have a different organizational structure, create separate organization maps for the files in this step.

[Help from Instructional Designer: Providing advice on appropriate length of units, possible alternatives for structure design, and logical connection between units.](#)

Step 6 – Designing Instructional Strategies

In this step, identify information delivery strategies (e.g., lecture notes or lecture notes plus video demonstration) and design activities for content units. Develop a comprehensive student activity/assessment plan which will allow you to achieve the stated course objectives. Combine course structure and activity/assessment plan to create a course schedule.

[Help from Instructional Designer: Demonstrating alternative delivery methods; helping to choose appropriate strategy and activities for different units; checking the feasibility of the delivery strategy.](#)

STAGE TWO – DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

Step 1 – Content Preparation

In this step, convert all your content to Internet-ready format, i.e., HTML format. This would include several tasks:

- Developing new materials (text, graphics, and multimedia files).
- Converting existing non-HTML files to HTML format.
- Developing non-computer-based supplemental materials if needed (materials to be mailed to students such as course reading packet and CD ROM).

Help from Instructional Designer: Providing advice on the appropriate software to use for development and conversion; helping overcome technical difficulties encountered by instructor in content preparation; providing format and/or layout guidelines for the files; helping to develop surveys and multimedia files; checking the appropriateness of non-computer-based supplemental materials.

An instructor may also work with the technical support specialist and multimedia specialist in this step.

Step 2 – Web Page Development (if applicable)

This is the step where the content files are pulled together to create web pages and web sites (where applicable) for the course. This would include several tasks:

- Designing an interface for the course web pages, i.e., a general look and feel and the navigation convention.
- Creating web pages for content units (this may be combined with the previous step in some cases).
- Integrating multimedia components to content web pages.
- Building links among web pages.

Help from Instructional Designer: Providing advice on the appropriate software to use for web page development; providing solution to design and technical problems regarding web page development; providing interface design and page layout guidelines; assisting in the production of multimedia materials.

An instructor may also work with the technical support specialist and video technology specialist in this step.

Step 3 – Creating the Course under a Course Management System

As it stands now at SMSU, an online course will be delivered through the SMSU Online Blackboard system (<http://eSchool.smsu.edu>). Therefore, after all the materials have been developed, the next step is to build the actual course in Blackboard. This would involve several steps:

1. Creating a course site on the Blackboard server.
2. Learning to use the Blackboard.
3. Transferring all content materials into Blackboard.
4. Setting up course components in the course site.
5. Setting up class management options in the course site.
6. Making modifications if necessary.

Help from Instructional Designer: Providing assistance in creating/building a course site and using Blackboard.

Step 4 – Testing the Course

After the complete course has been built on Blackboard, test all aspects of the course from the student's perspective. Things to check include:

- Content accuracy
- Content display
- Internal and external links
- Functionality of individual course component

[Help from Instructional Designer: Helping with testing the course.](#)

STAGE THREE – COURSE DELIVERY AND MANAGEMENT

This stage takes place when the course is actually being offered. It involves managing all aspects of the course constantly. The tasks include:

- Administering and managing the course
- Updating student information
- Updating content information
- Conducting online discussion with students
- Monitoring student discussion groups (if applicable)
- Collecting, grading, and returning student tests, assignments, papers, etc.
- Communicating with students through announcements and e-mail
- Tracking and monitoring student progress
- Collecting and analyzing feedback on the course for future use (beginning-of-semester, mid-semester, and end-of-semester surveys)

[Help from Instructional Designer: Helping to address concerns regarding delivery of the course.](#)