DOTS
DEPAUL ONLINE TEACHING SERIES

Module 1
Introduction to DOTS and to Online Course Design

1. Overview & Objectives

Estimated time to complete Module 1: ~8 hours

Video Overview of Module 1 [Duration: 2'30"]

Transcript

"Congratulations on going through the "Start Here" page and completing the preface to Module 1. You will find that preface useful and increasingly meaningful as the course progresses.

As you notice, DOTS looks quite different from the Blackboard courses you may be more familiar with. The cosmetic and delivery differences complement deeper important differences, related to the design process and quality standards employed.
This first module introduces you systematically, but also by example, to both the design process, established in the 1980s under the name Backward Design, and the quality standards that guided us, outlined by Quality Matters, a faculty-centered course-enhancement process, sponsored by a consortium of Maryland colleges and universities and utilized nationally.

For the next seven days, we will work together online to build our online course community. You will be asked to

- introduce yourselves and tell us what you hope to get out of this course,
- use the module's resources to interpret a short version of the Quality Matters standards and apply it to the evaluation of a sample online course, and finally
- work together with your colleagues and the facilitators to come up with a commonly agreed upon short-list of pros and cons within the reviewed course, which you can justify with the help of the module's resources and can have inform your own work.

By the way, don't let the fact that I was also the instructor of the reviewed course stop you from being as critical as you can. Please be critical!

We expect all online activities to be completed by early Friday morning, in time for our first face-to-face meeting, on Friday the 24th, which will conclude the module.

As will be the case with all our face-to-face meetings, we'll have a full schedule, wrapping up our online week with your comments and concerns and participating in presentations and workshops that address the tools showcased in the online portion of the course. Highlights for this upcoming Friday include introductions by the program directors, a remote presentation by Professor Rebecca Weintraub from the University of Southern California, and a workshop familiarizing you with your new tablet computer.

So, let's proceed with Module 1.
I'll be with you throughout this online week and look forward to seeing you in person on the 24th."

Topics

- Introducing DOTS: Instructional design principles, case studies, best practices, and supporting technologies for online course design and delivery
- Building an online class community
- Evaluating online course design using clearly delineated quality standards
- Project- and team-based learning (ongoing throughout DOTS)
- Hardware and software tour of your new tablet computer

Objectives

- Familiarize yourselves with the overall goals, structure, and expectations of DOTS
- Demonstrate understanding of the online instructional design process as it relates to DOTS
- Identify and experience strategies for community building in your online courses, while being cognizant of the accessibility issues confronting online students with disabilities
- Identify, interpret, and apply the online-course-design evaluation standards outlined by Quality Matters (short form)
- Participate in asynchronous student-student interactions, in low- and high-stakes contexts
- Get acquainted with your new tablet computer and identify its main hardware and software components and functions

2. Assignments and Resources

Assignment 1

Write a single discussion-board post to
i) introduce yourself to the rest of the DOTS participants,
ii) briefly outline the challenges/opportunities you anticipate to face when teaching online, and
iii) list what you hope to get out of DOTS.

Browse through the posts of your fellow participants to get a sense of the class community, and feel free to comment on them (comments optional). Getting familiar with your fellow participants and their online learning and DOTS expectations will be particularly useful as you work on your group-based assignments.

Resources

- “Building an Online Course Community, Part 1”
- "Who I am and why I'm here" forum in the Discussions area [available only online]

Timeline

- **Start:** Friday, 4/17
- **End:** Thursday, 4/23, 6:00 p.m.

Assignment 2

Review and comment on the quality of a sample blended (*i.e.* partially online and partially face-to-face) course, "Topics in Musicianship: Listening to Films," by filling out the "Quality Matters" rubric (short form). Use the resources below, and your own understanding of course design, to interpret and apply the eight general "Quality Matters" standards to your review of the sample course.

Print out the rubric and enter the requested ratings and accompanying comments by hand. The completed rubric will be one of your resources for Assignment 3.

Resources

- Module 1 Lecture Notes
- Quality Matters Rubric – short form
- “Topics in Musicianship” Blackboard course
  Log in to the old Blackboard system [https://oldoll.depaul.edu/] to locate and enter the course. You have all been added to the course as students.

Timeline

- **Start:** Saturday, 4/18
- **End:** Tuesday, 4/21, 11:59 p.m.

Assignment 3

Working online in groups of three to four participants, use the results of your individual reviews to come to a consensus on the sample course review, with regards to the eight "Quality Matters" standards.

i) Distill what you consider, as a group, to be the most important pros and cons of the reviewed course per standard, outline why, and assess the course with regards to the backward design process.

ii) Discuss possible examples of incorporating one or more of the course's positive features to your upcoming online course(s). You will be using this information in a future assignment.

You will draft and complete this assignment collaboratively in your designated group's discussion board, using the resources below.
Print out the three short and succinct "netiquette" resources provided, review them closely, and use them to

i) inform your online collaborations during DOTS,
ii) create online communication rubrics for your students (we will actually be doing this in Module 3), and
iii) provide feedback to your students' work.

Resources

- Module 1 Lecture Notes (same as in Assignment 2)
- Your individually completed "Quality Matters" form (from Assignment 2)

Netiquette

- Collaboration Instructions for Group Assignments in DOTS
- What Makes a Good Discussion Post?
- Feedback Guidelines (by *Quality Matters*) and Tips (by IDD)

- "Work Groups" menu area [available only online]
  Enter the "Work Groups" area, click on the "Group" that includes your name, enter the "Group Discussion Board," and select the "Module 1: Assignment 3" forum. Additional instructions are included in the forum's description.

Timeline

- **Start:** Monday, 4/20
- **End:** Friday, 4/24, 12:30 a.m. (*i.e.* late Thursday night)

Building an Online Course Community
Part 1: Tools, Strategies, Accessibility

[*Part 2 will be presented in Module 3*]

A. Preface

In traditional, face-to-face courses, you and your students take advantage of social cues and conventions that cannot be assumed in the online environment. It is essential to encourage community-building within your online courses, through ice-breaking discussions (*e.g.* sharing introductions, bios, interests, etc.), image, audio, video, and other file exchange, and more, all ideally combined with activities that also familiarize the students with the course environment. During Module 1, you will be participating in a simple community-building activity that utilizes the Discussion Board. Note that the activity instructions place your personal introductions within the context of the course's topic. Consider how you would like to present yourself to your online class and what opportunities you can create for your students to help them get to know each other.

Instructor:	Donald Opitz
Hardware:	(IDD video services)
Software:	(IDD video services)
File Format:	Flash video (1'55")
Server:	*Vimeo* (through IDD video services)
Transcript:	(Unavailable)

Video discussing some community-building strategies, presented by Dr. Donald Opitz from DePaul's School for New Learning. [http://vimeo.com/420238]

B. Video Class Introductions: Examples

We strongly recommend that all online courses include at least one video clip, introducing you and your course to your online students. IDD's video services will be your resource for the creation of such video clips. Two examples of video introductions are included below. The first is "homemade." The second was produced by IDD.

Instructor:	Pantelis Vassilakis
Course:	DOTS (IDD)
Hardware:	Digital camera; PC Laptop
Software:	*Windows Movie Maker*; *Real Producer*
File Format:	Real Streaming video (1'30")
Server:	DePaul's Streaming Media Server
Transcript:	(Accessibility feature; see below for more information)

Transcript

"Hello and welcome to the DePaul Online Teaching Series or DOTS, as we affectionately refer to it. I am Pantelis Vassilakis. Along with Dr. Sharon Guan, Director of Instructional Design and Development, I will be a facilitator for this blended course.

A musicologist by training, I hold a Bachelors of Arts in music composition and technology, both masters and doctoral degrees in music cognition, acoustics, and aesthetics, and a post-doctoral certificate in auditory science. I have been at DePaul since 2003, coordinating digital audio- and video-collection development for the library, working as an instructional designer, and also teaching as adjunct faculty at the school of music. I have been teaching for ten years now, including online and blended courses for the last two.

You will be creating video introductions such as this for your online courses, focusing mainly on the overall topic of each course. You may use a webcam or any digital camera, as I have done, to record simple introductions and upload them onto your Blackboard course site or preferably on DePaul's dedicated media server.

For more sophisticated video introductions, you can use the services of the Instructional Design and Development department. You will have the opportunity to see an example of such an introduction shortly, recorded for Dr. Beth Rubin, faculty member at the School of New Learning.

So, good luck with completing the online portion of this first module and I look forward to seeing you all on Friday, April 24."

Instructor:	Beth Rubin
Course:	Wanted! The "Best" and the "Brightest"! (School for New Learning)
Hardware:	(IDD video services)
Software:	(IDD video services)
File Format:	Flash video (2'45")
Server:	*Ooyala* (through IDD video services)
Transcript:	(Accessibility feature)

Description of Video Shots

This is a short video introduction by Beth Rubin. The clip includes two shots:

a) In the opening shot, the camera zooms-in on the front door of Lewis Towers, home of the School for New Learning in the Loop Campus; above this shot is the School's logo: a blue shield with the tree of wisdom and the text "DePaul University School for New Learning."

b) The main shot features Dr. Beth Rubin, Director of Distance Learning and faculty member at the School for New Learning. Beth has brown curly hair, is wearing a black and white striped shirt, has her hands at the podium, and is smiling quite enthusiastically throughout the video. Other than using some hand gestures to make her points, Beth is simply standing behind the podium, speaking.

Transcript

"My name is Beth Rubin and I'm the professor for this class. The class is called Wanted! The "Best" and the "Brightest"! Yes, it is in quotes. The quotes are VERY important! We will explore them as the course goes.

This course is about intelligence, a fascinating topic because we care so much about how intelligent we are. What is intelligence? How intelligent are you? How intelligence is your brother/is your sister...and are you intelligence in the same ways? Is there such a thing as intelligence? Is there more than one? We are going to look at these concepts. We are going to study what intelligence is, how it has been measured, the history of how it has been measured in other countries, US and Europe.

And what do we know once we know a person's intelligence? We make decisions based on many things based in that knowledge, that information... Whether or not to give people a job, whether or not to let people into a school, or whether or not to let people into a country and many, many other decisions.

Everyone will study these concepts. But depending on your competences, you will focus on the psychological theories of intelligence and of multiple intelligences. What is it? How many. You will focus on what it is; you may focus on the science of measuring competence. You may focus on the ethics of the decisions and the policies that we set based on measurements of intelligence.

The readings in the class are fabulous. The book is unbelievable. It's called the *The Mismeasure of Man* by Steven J. Gould. That's the only textbook. There are other readings posted online.

Some of it is challenging, but really interesting and accessible and written for a lay audience, but there will be parts of it we will work to understand. I look forward to getting to know you. You have my contact information in the course. Do not hesitate to get in touch.

See you in discussion!"

C. Benefits of Using Video Clips to Communicate with Your Students

- They give a "face" to a course environment that may otherwise appear cold or even alienating.
- They help students get some sense of who you are as an instructor, allowing your voice, body language, and commitment to and excitement about the subject matter to come across, re-introducing some of the advantages usually associated with face-to-face instruction.
- They provide opportunities to summarize and highlight the course materials in a modality different than text.
- They help retain student interest.

Using Web-based video services such as *YouTube* or *Viddler,* your students can also easily post short videos on Blackboard (embedded in or as links from a Discussion Board message), introducing themselves to you and their colleagues or responding to an assignment question. You will have the opportunity to use *Viddler* to post your "student" video during a future module.

D. How to...

You can create short video clips using:

- the professional video services at IDD (as is the case with the video introductions to the DOTS modules) or
- any digital camera, including a webcam, connected to your computer.

You may then upload your clips on one of numerous locations, such as:

- Blackboard (recommended only for very short clips; < 30 seconds),
- DePaul's streaming media server (account sign-up required; upload requires familiarity with FTP applications),
- *Viddler*, the Web-based video service discussed in the "Start Here" page, or
- *Ooyala*, the Web-based video service used for all video introductions in DOTS (service currently accessible to DePaul faculty only through IDD's video services).

We will be dedicating face-to-face workshops to the technology tools and skills associated with the video tasks and services described above.

E. Accessibility Issues for Students with Disabilities

Accessibility of audio and video content for people with learning and/or physical disabilities is frequently overlooked when designing online courses and materials. Blind and visually impaired students need audio to discern important visual details, while deaf and hard of hearing students, as well as ESL learners and students with auditory processing difficulties need access to captions and transcripts.
Although DOTS will not be formally addressing issues of accessibility, such issues have guided the design of this course. We strongly encourage you to

- seek the counsel and services of the following relevant centers at DePaul:
  i) Office of Students with Disabilities
  [http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/studentswithdisabilities/]
  ii) "Plus": Office for LD and/or ADD diagnosed students
  [http://www.studentaffairs.depaul.edu/plus/services.html]
- familiarize yourselves with the "Quality Matters" accessibility standards and consider them when designing and developing your online courses.

Accessibility Elements by "*Quality Matters*"

***Standard 8*: The face-to-face and online course components are accessible to all students**

8.1. Courses must incorporate ADA standards and reflect conformance with institutional policy regarding accessibility in online and hybrid courses.

All web-based courses should comply with the institution's accessibility and/or disability policies and procedures. In the absence of institutional policy, courses should comply with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).

Suggestions:

1. Include a link to the institution's ADA policy and/or guidelines, if available
2. Include a statement that tells the students how to gain access to an institution's disabilities support services (often known as ADA services)
3. If the course employs a Course Management System such as Angel, Blackboard, Desire2Learn, eCollege, WebCT, WebTycho, etc., a statement certifying ADA compliance from the CMS provider should be readily available or provided by the instructor.
4. If other tools and software are used to deliver the course, the instructor should provide documentation stating their degree of ADA compliance. The criteria mentioned in the annotations to 8.1 (and 8.2-8.4) should be met by these tools.

Additional elements of Section 508 are covered in the annotations to Standards 8.2-8.4.

8.2. Course pages and materials must provide equivalent alternatives to auditory and visual content.

Alternative means of access to course information should be provided for the vision- or hearing-impaired students, such as equivalent textual representations of images, audio, animations, and video in the course website.

Examples:

1. An audio lecture has a text transcript available.
2. A video clip, image, or animation is accompanied by a text transcript.
3. 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.
4. Videos and live audio have captions and a transcript. With archived audio, a transcription may be sufficient.
5. 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.

8.3. Course menus and pages must have links that are self-describing and meaningful.

Courses should provide Internet links that include useful descriptions of what students will find at the linked sites. These descriptions enable vision-impaired student to use screen reader software to understand links. In addition, instructors should provide directions that clearly direct students to the appropriate sub-pages within an external website.

Examples:

1. 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.”
2. Icons used as links should also have HTML tags or an accompanying text link.
3. To facilitate access to Internet sites by screen readers, links are arranged in numeric or alphabetic order, rather than simple bulleted form.

8.4. Courses must ensure screen readability.

Courses should employ 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.

Readability Tips List:

1. If using color-coding, use additional means to communicate information, such as bold or italics in conjunction, with color-coding.
2. Sufficient contrast is used in the font and background colors
3. Text size is consistent with typical View, Text, and Size settings.
4. Course pages provide an alternate, non-color-coded format.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. Provide a method that allows users to skip navigation or other elements that repeat on every page. 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.
9. 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.
10. Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) allow separation of content from presentation and thus provide more flexibility and accessibility of content.

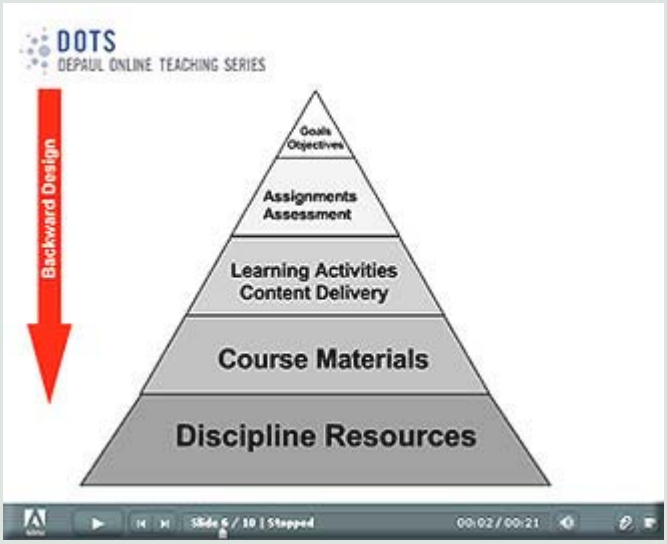
Module 1
Lecture Notes

Understanding Backward Design and "Quality Matters"

A. Introduction

Following up on our introduction to DOTS, we will now
i) concretely lay down the goals of the DOTS workshops,
ii) identify the theoretical principles underlying *Backward Design,* the course-design process we will be exploring throughout DOTS, and
iii) discuss the scope and value of the "Quality Matters" standards for online course design.
Start by watching a short introductory presentation by Dr. Guan (5':20").

[http://www.iddresources.org/dots1long/module1/intro_to_dots_presenter_files/index.htm]



Introduction to DOTS and Backward Design

This is a narrated slide presentation, created and optimized for online delivery with Adobe Presenter. Unlike PowerPoint, Adobe Presenter provides functionality that makes it easier to produce materials that are compliant with Section 508 of the American Disabilities Act.
The output is a flash file with the option to easily add indexing, notes, synchronized transcripts, attachments, and more. These features are especially useful when addressing students that have physiological, cognitive, or simply language difficulties.

Clicking on the image will open the presentation in a new browser window or tab. Maximize the browser to view the presentation index, transcript, and other features.

More on issues of accessibility is available within the resources accompanying Assignment 1.

Having trouble viewing the presentation? Make sure Adobe Flash Player is installed on your computer.
[http://www.adobe.com/products/flashplayer]

B. Backward Design

Introduced in the late 1980s by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, and part of their larger *Understanding by Design* framework, backward design emphasizes assessment as a means of evaluating student capacity to apply newly acquired knowledge in a variety of contexts.
Backward design involves three progressive stages:

- **Stage One**: Identify desired results
  What enduring understandings do I want my students to develop?
- **Stage Two**: Determine acceptable evidence
  How will my students demonstrate their understanding?
- **Stage Three**: Plan learning experiences and instruction
  With what resources and activities must I present my students to support development of the desired understanding?

Watch a short clip (3':00") with Carol Ann Tomlinson on *Differentiated Instruction*, Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins on *Understanding by Design*, and Robert J. Marzano on *What Works in School*
(Montage from the 2008 ASCD Summer Conference DVD http://www.ascd.org/ - no transcript available)
[http://www.ascd.org/ASCD/media/publications/eu200811_connecting.swf]

Listen to Grant Wiggins's and Jay McTighe's 1-min. description of backward design
[http://www.iddresources.org/dots1long/module1/backward_design.ram]

Transcript

Grant Wiggins:
"Mindful of the three stages of design: identify the desired results, determine the acceptable evidence and then, and only then, plan the learning, let's think about stage one. How do we identify, with the necessary specificity, the insights that we want the student to leave with? How do we do that in a practical way, given where we live—in a world of standards and content?"
Jay McTighe:
"On the template, Box A says: what do we want students to really understand? What are the enduring understandings we are after, embedded in the course in the content standards? Box B [says]: through what essential questions will we develop those understandings? The essential question becomes a doorway for uncovering and exploring big ideas. And then Box C [says]: what knowledge and skills are needed to meet the standard and are important prerequisites to the understandings that we hope to cultivate?"

Beginning with the end in mind (*i.e.* "what exactly do I want my students to know at the end of this class/module/course?"), teaching for understanding, and requiring students to apply and demonstrate their learning are not new concepts. What is new is the development, fine-tuning, formalization, and rigorous testing of specific design steps, which are also particularly well suited to address the structural and assessment challenges introduced in online learning.

To successfully implement the Backward Design process, instructors must first decide on what is essential for students to know—what is at the core or "heart" of a given topic—and then decide how they will know when students have reached that goal. The designing of assessments must therefore occur in the beginning, to give both the instructor and the students a clear destination for each course module. Once the destination is clear, the instructor is ideally equipped to create the best roadmap to get there.

Self-test: Do you understand DOTS & Backward Design? [available only online]
Take this self-test to see!
Note: *After you submit your responses and review the results, close the survey window.*

This test focuses less on improving your understanding of the DOTS program and more on demonstrating Blackboard's test features (such as types of questions and feedback automation) in low-stakes learning contexts.
For an online self-test to be effective, it must include numerous questions of multiple types, introduced by increasing complexity. More importantly, the feedback must be extensive enough to address correct responses with leading, follow-up questions and to offer customized feedback to each wrong response. You will be consulting a list of feedback tips when working on the third and last assignment for Module 1.

C. Quality Matters (QM)

The QM project develops and makes available an online course-design enhancement instrument that includes 40 quality elements. These are distributed across eight broad standards, are derived from an extensive review of relevant research literature, and are described in detail in the *Course Design Review Rubrics* document. As a QM subscriber, DePaul has access to this document and will be sharing portions of it with you throughout DOTS. For example, the portion describing the Accessibility Standard elements is included in the resources accompanying Assignment 1.

For Assignment 2, you will review a sample blended course, using the short QM review form with only the eight broad standards. A list of all 40 quality elements, grouped by standard and including a point value, is available at
[http://www.iddresources.org/dots1long/general/qm/qm_rubric_standards2008_10.pdf]

The main objective of the QM review process is neither to evaluate the instructor, nor to just give a "design" grade to the reviewed course. Rather, it is to assist the instructor in satisfying the most quality elements possible, improving her course design, and receiving the QM stamp of approval. In other words, rather than being a course-evaluation process, the QM review is a course-enhancement process, providing instructors with an opportunity to re-examine their course design based on solid standards.

Designing and delivering quality online courses is both challenging and necessary, as the demand for such courses keeps increasing exponentially. Projects like Quality Matters are much needed, welcomed, and overdue, and ultimately benefit our students.
You can visit Quality Matters at: http://www.qualitymatters.org.

Quality Matters Rubric Standards 2008-2010 edition with Assigned Point Values

	Standard	Points
Course Overview and Introduction	1.1 Instructions make clear how to get started and where to find various course components.	3
	1.2 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.	3
	1.3 Etiquette expectations (sometimes called "netiquette" for online discussions, email, and other forms of communication are stated clearly.	1
	1.4 The self-introduction by the instructor is appropriate and available online.	1
	1.5 Students are asked to introduce themselves to the class.	1
	1.6 Minimum student preparation, and, if applicable, prerequisite knowledge in the discipline are clearly stated.	1
	1.7 Minimum technical skills expected of the student are clearly stated.	1
Learning Objectives	2.1 The course learning objectives describe outcomes that are measurable.	3
	2.2 The module/unit learning objectives describe outcomes that are measurable and consistent with the course-level objectives.	3
	2.3 All learning objectives are stated clearly and written from the students' perspective.	3
	2.4 Instructions to students on how to meet the learning objectives are adequate and stated clearly.	3
	2.5 The learning objectives are appropriately designed for the level of the course.	2
Assessment and Measurement	3.1 The types of assessments selected measure the stated learning objectives and are consistent with course activities and resources.	3
	3.2 The course grading policy is stated clearly.	3
	3.3 Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of students' work and participation.	3
	3.4 The assessment instruments selected are sequenced, varied, and appropriate to the content being assessed.	2
	3.5 "Self-check" or practice assignments are provided, with timely feedback to students.	2
Resources and Materials	4.1 The instructional materials contribute to the achievement of the stated course and module/unit learning objectives.	3
	4.2 The relationship between the instructional materials and the learning activities is clearly explained to the student.	3
	4.3 The instructional materials have sufficient breadth, depth, and currency for the student to learn the subject.	2
	4.4. All resources and materials used in the course are appropriately cited.	1
Learner Engagement	5.1 The learning activities promote the achievement of the stated learning objectives.	3
	5.2 Learning activities foster instructor-student, content-student, and if appropriate to the course, student-student interaction.	3
	5.3 Clear standards are set for instructor responsiveness and availability (turn-around time for email, grade posting, etc.)	2
	5.4 The requirements for student interaction are clearly articulated.	2
Course Technology	6.1 The tools and media support the learning objectives, and are appropriately chosen to deliver the content of the course.	3
	6.2 The tools and media support student engagement and guide the student to become an active learner.	3
	6.3 Navigation throughout the online components of the course is logical, consistent, and efficient.	3
	6.4 Students have ready access to the technologies required in the course.	2
	6.5 The course components are compatible with current standards for delivery modes.	1
	6.6 Instructions on how to access resources at a distance are sufficient and easy to understand.	1
	6.7 The course design takes full advantage of available tools and media.	1
Learner Support	7.1 The course instructions articulate or link to clear description of the technical support offered.	2
	7.2 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.	2
	7.3 Course instructions articulate or link to an explanation of how the institution's student support services can help students reach their educational goals.	1
	7.4 Course instructions answer basic questions related to research, writing, technology, etc., or link to tutorials or other resources that provide the information.	1
Accessibility	8.1 The course incorporates ADA standards and reflect conformance with institutional policy regarding accessibility in online and hybrid courses.	3
	8.2 Course pages and course materials provide equivalent alternatives to auditory and visual content.	2
	8.3 Course pages have links that are self-describing and meaningful.	2
	8.4 The course ensures screen readability.	1

To meet Quality Matters review expectations a course must: Answer 'Yes' to all 3-point Essential Standards ***AND*** Earn 72 or more points.

COURSE REVIEW RUBRIC – "Quality Matters"
Short Form: General Review Standards

1. COURSE OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION

General Review Standard:
The overall design of the course is made clear to the student at the beginning of the course.

Yes ☐	Partially ☐	No ☐	Unsure ☐
COMMENTS			

2. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

General Review Standard:
Learning objectives are clearly stated and explained. They assist students in focusing their effort in the course.

Yes ☐	Partially ☐	No ☐	Unsure ☐
COMMENTS			

3. ASSESSMENT AND MEASUREMENT

General Review Standard:
Assessment strategies use established ways to measure effective learning, evaluate student progress by reference to stated learning objectives, and are designed to be integral to the learning process.

Yes ☐	Partially ☐	No ☐	Unsure ☐
COMMENTS			

4. RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

General Review Standard:
Instructional materials are sufficiently comprehensive to achieve stated course objectives and learning outcomes and are prepared by qualified persons competent in their fields.

Yes ☐	Partially ☐	No ☐	Unsure ☐
COMMENTS			

5. LEARNER ENGAGEMENT

General Review Standard:
Meaningful interaction between the instructor and students, among students, and between students and course materials is employed to motivate students and foster intellectual commitment and personal development.

Yes ☐	Partially ☐	No ☐	Unsure ☐
COMMENTS			

6. COURSE TECHNOLOGY

General Review Standard:
Course navigation and the technology employed in the course foster student engagement and ensure access to instructional materials and resources.

Yes ☐	Partially ☐	No ☐	Unsure ☐
COMMENTS			

7. LEARNER SUPPORT

General Review Standard:
The course facilitates student access to institutional services essential to student success.

Yes ☐	Partially ☐	No ☐	Unsure ☐
COMMENTS			

8. ACCESSIBILITY

General Review Standard:
The face-to-face and online course components are accessible to all students.

Yes ☐	Partially ☐	No ☐	Unsure ☐
COMMENTS			

COLLABORATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR GROUP ASSIGNMENTS

Use the appropriate forum under the "Discussions" menu item for questions on collaboration.

I. Overview – Deadlines

Group members will work collaboratively on all group-designated assignments using the Discussion Board dedicated to each Work Group ("Work Groups" menu item).
I will enter each module assignment as a new forum containing two threads per assignment question, one for the working draft of the group's answer ("drafting" thread) and one for the final version to be submitted by the assignment deadline ("submission" thread).
Observe the "start" and "end" deadlines posted with each assignment. The final end-deadline for each module will be by 12:30am on Fridays (*i.e.* late-night Thursdays), in time for the module's wrap-up meeting on (most) Friday afternoons.

II. Purpose of the group assignments

Group assignments are aimed at helping you

a) clarify your thoughts and strengthen your answers/arguments through discussions with your peers,
b) identify potential errors prior to submitting the assignment,
c) take advantage of your peers' strengths while they take advantage of yours, and
d) take advantage of the instructor's feedback during the assignment-drafting process, before submitting the version that will be graded.

III. Collaboration method

There are several ways to go about collaborating. We will use the following method:

One member per group must make the initial post by the "start" deadline to the "drafting" assignment thread. Initial posts can (and should) be quite rough drafts of response to the assignment questions.

After the initial post, all group members (including those making the initial post) work together to edit and develop this first draft into its final form. Developing the first draft involves commenting on it and on subsequent posts, agreeing/disagreeing with points raised and articulating the reasons for the reaction, enhancing them with additional information and clarifications, suggesting alternatives, fine-tuning their presentation, etc.

One group member must submit the final response to the "submission" thread by the "end" deadline. Use the Work Group's email feature to communicate within your group, warn others of delays, claim the lead for a final submission, etc.

IV. Posting instructions

a) Each assignment question will be entered by me as a separate discussion thread/post.
b) To view a post, click on its title.
c) To comment/reply on a post, hit the “Reply” button, located on the subject line.
d) The various posts will, by default, be organized so that the degree of indentation in the list of posts indicates where in the message structure each post belongs.
e) Read all posts.
f) Read your own posts before and after posting. If you’ve make an error you can correct it by clicking on the “Modify” button to the right of your post.
g) To progressively fine-tune the final draft, copy the post to which you are responding and paste it into your response for editing.
h) Continue working on the assignment question drafts, within the drafting threads, until a consensus has been reached by all members for the final versions, to be posted on the submission threads.

V. Suggestions for effective and efficient collaboration

a) Be prepared to support your arguments and receive respectful criticism.
b) Be respectful of your fellow group members and their ideas but do not be afraid to approach them critically.
c) Clearly state what points you agree/disagree with and why.
d) Always remember that the objective is not to push your opinions to others but to submit the most complete, best supported, and most convincing possible response(s) your group can produce within the deadline.

VI. The instructor’s role

I will be monitoring all discussion threads daily to
a) get an idea of each member's contribution to the final submission,
b) give feedback and direction as needed, and
c) help resolve potential deadlocks.
I will be grading the version submitted to the “submission thread” as well as the drafting process. There will be no “group” grade. Each group member will receive their own individual grade.

VII. Extra credit (5%)

As an incentive to all groups to improve their collaborative work, the group with a combination of a) highest group average grade and b) lowest deviation (i.e. lowest grade-variability among group members) throughout the workshop will receive a 5% extra credit. This is not to reward individual performance on assignments (the weekly grade is designed for this) but the quality of collaborative work.

What Makes a Good Discussion Post?

Adapted from materials by Gail Matthews-DeNatale, Simmons College, Boston, MA.

Edited by IDD staff.

Good discussion posts

are timely: The best messages in the world won't do your group any good if they're posted after the bulk of the discussion is over.

are clearly labeled: They include a meaningful subject line that clearly communicates the overall topic of each message to readers. For replies to existing messages, rather than simply hitting the "Reply" button, it may often be necessary to modify the existing subject line to better represent the response's content.

are well formatted: Avoid using all caps. All caps are generally interpreted as "shouting" in online communication and impede reading flow.

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are "on message": They indicate that you have carefully read and considered the assignment, the discussion prompt, and your colleagues' postings. Think through your messages in advance—compose them offline if possible—so that they are substantive, well written, and concise.

are grounded in evidence: They make explicit connections among course concepts, course readings, your firsthand experience, and the experiences of others in your group.

encourage others to provide evidence: They ask colleagues to explain "why," help others clarify their thoughts, and uncover inconsistencies or misconceptions.

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give the original post a "positive reading": Positive reading entails i) agreeing/disagreeing with points raised and articulating the reasons for the reaction, ii) enhancing points of agreement by including additional information/clarifications and by fine-tuning their presentation, and iii) following up on points of disagreement by suggesting alternatives.

stimulate thinking/reasoning: They pose provocative questions, encourage colleagues to raise questions, help colleagues address questions, raise alternative theories or explanations, and provide creative, breakthrough ideas.

move the understanding of the group forward: They create connections between course concepts and the thoughts and ideas of others in the group and bring the group's work into focus (e.g., by summarizing, noting patterns, etc.).

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are generous and respectful: They suggest resources/ideas that may help others in their work and learning. When disagreements arise, they allow others the benefit of the doubt, valuing deeper insight and communication over proving oneself "right."

recognize diversity: They acknowledge the potential for large diversity in background or opinion, supporting the creation of a respectful and productive environment for intellectual argumentation.

Feedback Guidelines by "*Quality Matters*"

One of the most important outcomes of a QM review is the feedback a faculty course developer receives about his or her online course. A course reviewer's comments and recommendations should be ***constructive***, ***specific***, ***measurable***, ***sensitive***, and ***balanced***.
Peer reviewers should not only make recommendations for changes, but they should also comment on the strengths of the course and features or activities that worked especially well in the online environment.

Constructive	Try to offer solutions, not just identify problems.
Specific	Include a specific example of what is being recommended.
Measurable	Suggest ways that the instructor or instructional designer will know a recommendation has been implemented.
Sensitive	Keep recommendations and comments on a positive note. Avoid the use of negative language. Use phrases like: You may want to consider.... In my course, I .... It would be helpful if.... It appears that.... You might indicate.... It might be useful to .... I had a clear sense of...; however, I was confused about.... I'd like to suggest....
Balanced	Point out strengths as well as weaknesses.

Giving and Receiving Feedback

Compiled by IDD staff

Team-based learning involves an energizing, collaborative flow of ideas and supports a "give and take" that has the potential to be intellectually invigorating. This assumes that all discussants are prepared to accept and offer constructive criticism, to question and be questioned. Intellectual disagreements and conflicts that do not involve sarcasm or personal attacks are necessary in order to formulate strong intellectual argumentation skills and improve understanding, and should be encouraged. Yet, such environments may also be somewhat intimidating, especially when asked to provide criticism to one's peers.
Use the following suggestions as a resource when providing feedback to your students or peers, as well as when preparing feedback tips for your students.

Tips for Giving Feedback

Be specific: Clearly relate your comments to the assignment goals, but don't simply provide the correct answer. Leading questions and observations will be more constructive than precise directives on what to do.

Be critical: The main point of feedback is to help students/peers improve their work. While it is important to be respectful and encouraging, being overly "nice" and "congratulatory" may miss an opportunity to help authors make substantive improvements to their work.

Be respectful and encouraging: While being critical is necessary to improve understanding, it is important to accomplish this without involving personal attacks or discouraging free expression. Do recognize and highlight positive aspects of the work and use these as constructive examples and a gateway to your critical comments.

Be thorough: Ideally, your feedback will make direct connections among specific aspects of the author's work and the original assignment's goals, directions, etc. Make sure you are clear on the goals, expectations, and implications of the original assignment/project. Read the response several times and take notes on unresolved questions, items that require more clarification, and specific requests for feedback made by the author.

Tips for Composing a Feedback Message

Value the work: State what you like about the work so far and identify the connections you see between the work and the assignment goals.

State concerns: Clearly identify aspects of the work that are off-topic, speculative, not directly informed by the assigned resources, redundant, and/or not-well-written.

Suggest solutions and prompt improvements: Share specific ideas that will help improve the work, point to specific places in the assigned resources that need to be (re)consulted/(re)addressed, and, if possible, offer examples. If student authors share a dilemma, guide them accordingly, without giving away the answer. Rather, ask questions that will guide them in discovering the answer.

Give the work a *positive reading*: Constructive criticism of a work manifests itself in what peer review circles refer to as a “positive reading” of the work. As a reminder, positive reading entails:
i) agreeing/disagreeing with points raised and articulating the reasons for the reaction,
ii) enhancing points of agreement by including additional information/clarifications and by fine-tuning their presentation, and
iii) following up on points of disagreement by suggesting alternatives.

Tips for Receiving Feedback

Seek it: Resist the temptation to be so overly protective or critical of your work that you avoid feedback before final completion/submission. Rather, recognize the potential for improvement through collaboration and offer your work to others for early criticism.

Guide it: For early drafts, think about and be as explicit as possible on the type of feedback you are after and on the specific aspects of the work you would like commentary. For later drafts, offer questions that guide and most importantly encourage constructive criticism.

Let it sink in: After you receive feedback, take time and mull it over. Try to go past feeling defensive, a reaction that seems to often accompany reception of criticism, and see if/how the feedback you received can help you improve your work.

Value it: Anyone who has provided feedback, as an instructor, an informal/formal collaborator, or a formal peer reviewer, is well aware of the amount of time it takes to read and provide thoughtful commentary to someone else’s work. Good feedback (see the “tips for giving feedback,” above) is a gift from the sender to you and should be approached as such. Even if you don't agree with (or like) the feedback, try to accept it in the sprit in which it was given and recognize its potential to improve the quality of your work and, with it, your confidence and enthusiasm.

Follow up on it: In the words of instructional designer Larry Porter, "Feedback does not assume that the giver is totally right and the receiver wrong; instead, it is an invitation to interaction." Ask your colleagues/instructors for further clarification as needed, brainstorm ideas with them, and debate the pros and cons of any revision ideas.

References and Additional Resources

Review these optional additional resources for more information on the module's topics:
[http://www.iddresources.org/dots1long/module1/module01_additional.html]

WORK GROUPS - MODULE 1: ASSIGNMENT 3

Forum Instructions

All group members will work in this forum together to draft and submit two posts.
i) The first will distill what you consider, as a group, to be the most important pros and cons of the reviewed course in terms of the eight "Quality Maters" standards, outline why, and assess the course with regards to the backward design process.
ii) The second will discuss possible examples of incorporating one or more of the course's positive features to your upcoming online course(s). You will be using this information in a future assignment.

- Refer to your completed “Quality Matters” review and the “Collaboration Instructions for Group Assignments in DOTS” document. [http://www.iddresources.org/dots1long/general/dots_collaboration_instructions.pdf]
- Click on the forum's title to enter it.
- Hit the small arrow at the top of the "Date" column to arrange the posts by ascending/descending chronological order.
- Click on the "Drafting" thread of each question and hit "Reply" to enter the first post. Read all posts and always reply to the latest, unless you have a specific reason to address a previous post without reference to the subsequent ones.
- Include a meaningful subject line in your posts that clearly communicates the overall topic of your message. For replies to existing messages, it may often be necessary to modify the existing subject line to better represent the response’s content, before hitting the "Reply" button.
- Use the “Submission” thread of each question to post your final replies by the deadline on Friday, 4/24, 12:30 a.m.

This forum allows you to include attachments, modify your own posts, tag posts (*i.e.* attach representative keywords to them), and "quote" a previous post in your reply. In addition, you can subscribe to the forum so that an email is sent to you every time a new message is posted.
You cannot add new threads. To post a message you must open an existing one and reply to it.

Reviewed Course Information

- This was a blended course, taught 1/3 online and 2/3 face-to-face.
- As this is an old course, if you wish to see the announcements, you will have to select the "View All" tab on the "Announcements" page.
- The reviewed course's instructor is, indeed, one of the DOTS facilitators. Do not let this stop you from being critical!

Module 1 Face-to-Face Meeting Agenda

Date: Friday, April 24
Time: 3:00 PM – 6:00 PM
Location: JTR417

Time	Topic	Presenter(s)
3:00-3:15 PM	Opening Remarks & Program Introduction	**GianMario Besana**, Associate Vice-President of Academic Technology and Online Learning **Sharon Guan**, Director, IDD
3:15-3:35 PM	Reflections on the Online Portion of Module 1	**Pantelis Vassilakis**, Instructional Design Consultant, IDD, and **DOTS participants**
3:40-4:30 PM	"Designing Outcome-Based Communication Courses Online" (via *Wimba*)	**Rebecca Weintraub**, Director, Communication Management Master's Program, Annenberg School of Communication, University of Southern California
4:30-4:45 PM	DOTS Tech Package & Tech Support	**Diane Tarkowski**, ITD **Jim Janossy**, ITD **Russ Patterson**, ITD
4:45-5:20 PM	Dinner / Discussion	
5:20-6:00 PM	Tablet PC Workshop	**GianMario Besana**