

Creating a Course Template with Quality in Mind

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About Me

- 18+ years in higher ed
- Advising, teaching, instructional design
- Teaching online since 2008
- MS Instructional Technology
- MA English
- BA Communication-Media Studies



Presentation Overview

- Objectives
 - Review how and why we created the template
 - Discuss how Quality Matters influenced our design
 - Outline the benefits of using a template for both faculty and students
 - Take a tour of the RVC Canvas course template
 - Discuss the implementation, both challenges and successes

A Brief Timeline

- Feb. 2020: Our online learning department formed
- March 2020: Transitioned to fully remote teaching
- Spring/Summer 2020: Focused on faculty training and course reviews for those new to online teaching; exploring QM with basic membership
- Fall 2020: Executive Director hired
- Spring 2021: Upgraded to full QM membership and started PD; How can we improve our online courses?

In the Beginning...

- Began looking into template options
 - Canvas had a few free ones available
 - Wanted one more tailored to our institution
- Researched design strategies; brainstormed what to include
- Began more involvement with Quality Matters
- Lightbulb moment: Use Quality Matters rubric to guide the template design

Quality Matters

- Considered the gold standard in online course and program design
 - Over 1500 organizations from higher education, K-12 secondary, educational publishing, and continuing education and professional
- Flagship tool: [The QM Rubric](#)
- Researched-based best practices in online course design
 - 8 General Standards, 42 Specific Review Standards
 - The RVC template addresses a majority of the Specific Review Standards

Using a Rubric to Guide Template Design

- QM, ION, institutional rubrics
- Researched-based best practices in online course design
- Ensures effective course design

Benefits of a Template

- Faculty
 - Structure ready to go
 - Faculty can focus on filling in content
 - Make transition to remote teaching a little easier
 - Head start on QM certification, if desired
- Students
 - Consistent look and feel
 - Ease of navigation for students
 - Students spend less time searching for materials

Template Tour: Home Page

- Image of our central campus
 - Can be tailored to course/subject area
- Information in brackets []
 - Meant to be replaced or deleted
- Quick Links
 - Table used for layout, but still maintains accessibility with header row



Template Tour: FYI Module

- For the Instructor
 - Meant to stay unpublished
 - Contains general information about the template
 - Provides guidance and resources for using Canvas

Template Tour: Welcome Module

- Provides general course and campus information
- Faculty can add and adapt as needed
- Sections designated with a headers and an emoji
 - Course Information
 - Resources
 - Interacting with Others

Template Tour: Content Modules

- All structured the same
- Start with overview of week/module
 - List weekly objectives and learning activities and connect them to course modules
- Materials
- Assignments
- Discussions
- Quizzes
- End with wrap up and preview of next week(s)

Implementation

- Soft roll out
- Sandbox with template
- Got the word out
- Challenges
 - Using the blueprint feature
 - Usage is optional
- Successes
 - Positive feedback from instructors
 - Leadership supports it

Free Design Resources

- Images: [Pixabay](#), [Pexels](#)
- Color Scheme: [Coolors](#)
- Canvas Commons: Canvas Queen-Coding
- Emoji Codes: [Emoji Unicode Reference](#)

Questions?



Thank You!



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