**Online Course Development**   
**Directions for using Templates**

*(Revised 8/06/21)*

[Content Development 3](#_Toc79139176)

[Avoid Plagiarism in Course Content 4](#_Toc79139177)

[Cite Your Sources 4](#_Toc79139178)

[Media and Images 4](#_Toc79139179)

[Course Map 5](#_Toc79139180)

[Grading Information 5](#_Toc79139181)

[Assignment Descriptions 6](#_Toc79139182)

[Lesson Content 7](#_Toc79139183)

[Introduction 7](#_Toc79139184)

[Objectives 7](#_Toc79139185)

[Instructional Content 7](#_Toc79139186)

[Video Content 10](#_Toc79139187)

[Assignments 11](#_Toc79139188)

[Readings 11](#_Toc79139189)

[Discussions 11](#_Toc79139190)

[Activities/Exercises 13](#_Toc79139191)

[Assessments 13](#_Toc79139192)

[Project Tasks 13](#_Toc79139193)

[Section 508 and WCAG 2.0 Compliance 14](#_Toc79139194)

[Projects 15](#_Toc79139195)

[Macroeconomic Indicator Project Example 15](#_Toc79139196)

[Assessments 17](#_Toc79139197)

[Assessment Pools 17](#_Toc79139198)

[Question Writing Best Practices/Tips 18](#_Toc79139199)

[Question Formatting Protocols 19](#_Toc79139200)

Content Development

When developing content for a course, the style of writing and the tone of the content are up to you as the subject matter expert. However, some consistency throughout all courses is important, so please keep in mind these guidelines:

* Use active voice and present tense
  + Avoid use of the word “will” as much as possible
  + For example, in an overview instead of saying “You will read about…” or “You will learn…” try saying “This lesson you read about…” or “You learn how to…”
* Avoid the use of gerunds (-ing words)
* Avoid contractions and ampersands
* Avoid the use of “I” if it would require unnecessary explanations by the instructor teaching the course
  + Remember that you are not the only instructor for the course
* When addressing students, use a more personal form of address: *you* rather than *students*
* Use one space between sentences, rather than two

The [Federal Plain Language Guidelines](http://www.plainlanguage.gov/) can also help you write more clearly. Please spend some time reviewing this website for key points. These sections are particularly pertinent to our online course development:

[Think about your audience](http://www.plainlanguage.gov/howto/guidelines/FederalPLGuidelines/think.cfm)

[Organize](http://www.plainlanguage.gov/howto/guidelines/FederalPLGuidelines/organize.cfm)

[Write your document](http://www.plainlanguage.gov/howto/guidelines/FederalPLGuidelines/write.cfm)

[Repurpose print material for the web](http://www.plainlanguage.gov/howto/guidelines/FederalPLGuidelines/repurpose.cfm)

Avoid Plagiarism in Course Content  
  
Written instructional content MUST be original content! This is what you are being paid to do.

Limit your use of other people’s words/thoughts to no more than 10% of your content. You are bound by the same APA guidelines as your students and must avoid plagiarism and copyright issues as well, so *use inline citations and references as we require*. If these are not provided, the instructional designer must assume you are conveying original content. If they suspect the content is not original content, they *will* research the issue.

Cite Your SourcesFollow Sullivan’s APA guidelines for how to cite and reference sources and avoid plagiarism. For an overview of these guidelines, visit <http://libguides.sullivan.edu/apa>.

Be sure to include citations within the content as well as references at the bottom of lecture content. If you are going to quote more than 10% of any document, article, or web page, that content **is NOT copied** into an online course. **Instead, we must provide a link to the content.** If you are going to link to existing sources in your course, you should still provide a framework for the content as a whole, using an introduction and/or a synopsis.

**You MUST abide by Sullivan’s plagiarism policy**. If you are unfamiliar with that policy, please review the policy in the student handbook. Your instructional designer is familiar with these guidelines and is on the lookout for instances of plagiarism just as you are on the lookout in your student’s work. The instructional designer uses web searches to identify suspected cases of plagiarism.

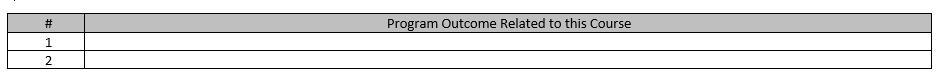
Media and Images  
**All content, to include images and media, is subject to copyright laws.** If an image is royalty free, that does not mean you can use it without citing it. This applies to most images found on the internet, with the exception of Microsoft.com and other sites specifically marked as copywrite-free or public domain. *Permission must be obtained and images cited as requested by the supplier.*

If you want to use images and are having difficulty finding what you need, your instructional designer is glad to assist you. However, it is *your responsibility to obtain copyright permission and ensure that Sullivan University has permission to use the material*, not just you as an individual. **All copyright permissions should be obtained in writing and a copy provided to your instructional designer.**

Course Map

Sullivan University uses the Course Map Template to outline the program and course objectives, lesson enabling objectives, and when/how each objective is assessed within your course.

A course map is a design tool used to ensure that the course content and assessments methods clearly measure the course objectives. The Dean who requested the course should provide you with a map that has the top section of the map already filled in and approved. This section will have program level objectives, course objectives, and any relevant guidance filled in for you.



Table

Description automatically generated

This high level overview of your intended content can then be refined through each weekly content map. In this example, the objectives that appear in the table are enabling objectives (objectives that *enable* completion of the course objective) that present subcomponents of teaching the concepts/procedures/processes included in the course, identify the corresponding Course Level objectives (second column), outline the methods you intend to use to teach (third column), and the methods you plan to use to measure whether students have achieved the objective (fourth column).

For example, as shown in the template, an objective for the course might be the basis of the objectives and lectures of Lesson 1 of the course and be assessed through the Discussion and a comprehensive Project. Note that the verb used in the objective correlates to the assessment method. Always use measurable and observable verbs!

Table

Description automatically generated

Grading Information

The grading for the course consists of a total of 100% with percentages identified by assignment type as shown in the table below (example only).

**Table

Description automatically generated**

Assignment Descriptions  
The course map also provides a brief overview of topics and assignments. Provide a description of each assignment. Emphasize the importance of the assignments and what they are intended to teach as well as to gauge. For example:

*Discussions*

Weekly discussions are designed to engage your thinking about the readings as well as your interaction with other students in the course. Discussion postings should be courteous, thoughtful, and carefully written.

*Quizzes*

Quizzes are given to ensure that you are reading the textbook content and assigned articles. Careful and timely reading is essential to your success in this course. What you read should inform all of your assignments, including exams, projects, and discussions.

A typical week runs Monday through Sunday with assignments due at the end of the week. Some assignments may span several weeks, and discussion forums may require an initial response earlier in the week with final comments due Sunday. For various reasons, you may occasionally want a due day other than Sunday. In Lesson 11 for instance, the due day is typically no later than Wednesday. This allows the instructor time to grade final projects and assessments and submit grades by the following Monday.

Provide the due day guidance in descriptions if there are variances from the norm described above, but be aware that the individual instructor is allowed to change those due dates in their course section.

Note: Due dates are *not* included in the *weekly* lesson assignments pages.

**Reminder: Included *automatically* in every course are an explanation and warning about plagiarism, instructions on the mechanics of how to use** discussion forums, take assessments, and submit assignments to the drop box. You *do not need to recreate* these instructions.

Lesson Content

Use the Lesson Content Template to create, document, and deliver your original content each development week.

This file is meant to be used as a separate document delivered each Lesson, not as one large file that is added onto/expanded each week. Save as “Week 1 Content.doc”, etc.

|  |
| --- |
| **Notes for Specific Lessons**  **Lesson 1** should contain a moderate workload, with light assignments and no quizzes since students are still being enrolled.  **Lesson 11** should not include any deliverables other than a final project or assessment, critiques, and feedback. |

**Lessons 1-11**:Provide a title/topic for each week

Introduction

Open with some inspiring content that is thematically tied to the week and touches on the topics for the week. Rather than a listing of what the student can expect to learn in the coming week, try a more narrative approach, such as this example:

Welcome to Lesson 1. This week provides an introduction to poster design and the history of posters. Posters, as we know them, date back to the later 1800s in Europe where painting met the mass needs of advertising. The very nature of advertising required the creation of a new medium that included art in combination with type or words. It also required quantity. Whereas paintings were one-of-a-kind creations, multiples were now needed for mass distribution of information.

With Jules Cheret’s invention of the three-stone lithographic process, artists were able to reproduce most colors from red, yellow and blue, printed in tight registration with each other. This lithographic process enabled the creation of poster art that was both attractive and economical. This powerful innovation quickly became the dominant means of mass communication, bringing art to the common man and ushering in the modern age of advertising.

Objectives

List the competencies the student should develop as a result of successfully completing the lesson. Objectives emphasize mastery and use the language of visible, measurable proof (e.g., *identify*, *describe*, *demonstrate*, *compare and contrast*). The lesson objectives should refer back to the course outcomes. Avoid use of unobservable, unmeasurable terms such as ‘understand,’ ‘know,’ or ‘appreciate.’ A maximum of 3-4 objectives per week is a good rule of thumb. For example:

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

* Describe basic marketing concepts
* Explain how marketing affects design
* Write a creative brief that describes the situational overview, target audience, goals and objectives, marketing strategy, and creative strategy for a graphic-design project

Instructional Content

Instructional content each week/lesson should contain approximately 4 hours of direct, original instruction.

Each lesson should promote instructor-to-student interaction, such as a discussion, assignment, activity, or assessment. Reading is not interaction. Occasionally, if there is no interaction during a particular lesson, there must be an explanation and instruction for what the student should do that lesson, such as work on a research paper or multi-week project.

Lessons demonstrate principles of good instruction and include:

* Lesson objectives derived from the course objectives
* An introduction
  + A story or scenario to introduce the topic
  + Builds upon student’s prior knowledge
  + Provides context for the lesson (where it fits within the course)
* Instructional activities based on each objective
  + Text readings\*, narrated PowerPoints\*, podcasts, audio or video (lecture)
  + Role play – relay a scenario and assign students to play parts in the scenario
  + Case study
  + Debate
  + Discussion
  + Field trip
  + Webquest
  + Collaborations/Cooperative/Group activities
  + Procedural task (step-by-step instruction)
  + Interviews
* Opportunities for students to engage in active learning (examples below)
  + Practice/feedback activity
  + Self-assessment
  + Discussion forum
  + Reflection assignment
  + Individual or group research
* Opportunities for interaction (examples below)
  + Discussion forums
  + Chat session
  + Blog/Wiki
* Graded assignments and/or assessments that are based on the lesson objectives
* Directions for completing assignments are clear and explicit
* The amount of content and the time required to complete the lesson is appropriate and sufficient

\* While lessons may contain readings from the textbook and/or non-narrated PowerPoint presentations based on the textbook, these alone are not sufficient to constitute a week’s worth of instruction.

Provide a title for your lecture(s). **Remember that written instructional content must be *original* content.** Limit your use of other people’s words/thoughts to **no more than 10%** of your content. *You are bound by the same APA guidelines as your students and must avoid plagiarism and copyright issues as well, so use citations as required.* Instructional designers monitor content for instances of plagiarism and copyright violations. If such instances are found, the Instructional Designer will contact your dean for resolution of the issue(s). This may result in termination of your contract with the department.

This is your opportunity to relay *your experience and knowledge as an expert in the field*. The lecture is where you can lend personal insight to weekly topics. We do *not* want simply a synopsis of a chapter in the text--this is where your voice comes through. Relay a story or scenario to introduce the topic. Include *new information* or elaborate on a topic that is in the textbook. You may also add links to websites and videos.

Remember to consider your learning objectives! If the topic of discussion does not directly support a learning objective, it probably should not be included. The typical content for a single topic is 1-2 pages in length; however, this is a guideline only. Let the instructional need determine the length. Ask your instructional designer if you are having trouble deciding where to “break” content.

The goal for online courses is to build original lecture material around *topics* rather than textbooks. This way, when the textbook or the edition changes the course will not have to be rebuilt. **To this end, avoid referring to textbook chapters and pages in your lecture, and avoid summarizing textbook content.**

If you do use video, podcasts, websites, or other multimedia *you must frame that content* by telling the students why the video/podcast/website is relevant or important for them to view. It is also best practice to include the approximate length of viewing/listening times for multimedia.

**PowerPoint or Other Slide Presentations** - If you wish to use a PowerPoint/Prezi (or other slide style) presentation it should add value to the course and abide by industry best practice. Though these particular presentations are not narrated they cover many points of current best practice:

[Death by PowerPoint](http://www.slideshare.net/thecroaker/death-by-powerpoint)

[Top Ten Slide Tips](http://www.garrreynolds.com/Presentation/slides.html)

*You cannot assume* a slide set provided in an instructor guide or on an instructor CD is a quality presentation. **If used, it must have narration, accurate transcripts, and clear instructor notes.** This implies that you *must modify the presentation to make it comply*. There are also several steps to providing an ADA 508 compliant presentation (more on 508 compliance to follow in this document). Some key do’s and don’ts:

*DON’T*

* Use features such as transitions or word art just because they are there. Elements that are required to understand your message may be fine, but few things such as fade or dissolve transitions, or ‘flying in’ bullet points, are ever really required.
* Use automatic timing to advance slides. Allow students to set the pace and advance slides themselves.

*DO*

* Use the provided screen layout templates appropriate for your content type, i.e., if you have text and a graphic use a layout that includes a specific type of preformatted layout box for text and graphics rather than inserting a text box or a graphic yourself directly into the slide, or if you need two column text select a template that automatically formats two columns.
* Watch out for the contrast levels of any preformatted color styles you may select to use. Though available in the program, many of the color combinations (while pretty) that may be suitable for an in-class presentation, may not have enough contrast between background and text for an online presentation.
* Ensure that any charts and graphs contain captions and long descriptions/details within the instructor notes. This is because many graphics are just like an airline’s ‘black box’ to a visual screen reader - it cannot be opened or examined by the screen reader and therefore the content is lost to the disabled student. A verbal description in the notes explaining the graphic is required.
* Use the Accessibility Checker: File>Check for Issues>Check Accessibility to see what issues your completed presentation contains…then *fix those issues* before submitting the content to your ID.

You may include your transcription of each slide within the instructor notes of the presentation itself or as a separate document. Again this presentation must be placed in context *with some introduction related to its importance or relevance to the course*.

**Due to all these issues the use of PowerPoint presentations is a joint decision between you and your assigned instructional designer, decided on a case-by-case basis.**

For a humorous, yet relevant look at using PowerPoint *poorly* watch the following brief (app. 5 minute) presentation:

[Life After Death by PowerPoint](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lpvgfmEU2Ck) by Don McMillan

**Instructional Content Resources** - These resources are available to you to assist with development of your lecture content.

An increasing number of Sullivan University courses are being developed with Free/Open Educational Resources (OER).  OER includes resources developed by faculty across the world and made available at no cost to faculty and students. A growing body of empirical studies are showing that the use of OER in place of costly publisher materials is having multiple positive effects for students across disciplines.

Sullivan University Library has partnered with Instructional Design and Support in a compilation of resources for all SU programs. These include free textbooks written by college and university faculty, videos, tutorials and many other resources that you can incorporate into your courses at no cost to students. The Open Educational Resources site can be accessed at <https://libguides.sullivan.edu/oer>

The databases located through Sullivan University Library’s webpage provide access to over 30,000 academic journals, trade publications, and general publications on a variety of subjects. Books 24x7 is a collection of business and IT ebooks with tens of thousands of ebooks.

Sullivan University may already have copyright permission to use some of the articles located through their library resources. If in doubt, contact library staff.

If you wish to use an article you have identified in the databases or ebooks, provide the ID the complete citation for use in the course. If you send us a link you have generated yourself the link may not work in the future (it provides only temporary access). Follow these links if you need instructions for how to access the [databases or the ebooks](http://libguides.sullivan.edu/books24x7).

[Databases of articles and ebooks](http://libguides.sullivan.edu/)

[Virtual Library: Books and Ebooks search](http://sullivan.tlcdelivers.com:8080/?config=7#section=home)

Video Content

Video content requires some special consideration due to Section 508 (of the ADA) requirements for captioning. We encourage use of video from third party sites such as Ted Talks or Khan Academy. You may also create your own video (such as demonstrations of how to perform calculations or use a computer program). However, you must be aware of, and comply with, the following requirements:

* Search for video that already has closed captioning – do this by adding “, cc” at the end of any search term you use. For example: “Leadership, cc”. This will limit your results to those videos already closed captioned.
* Vet all videos for relevance of the content as well as the accuracy of the captioning. This may require you to review the video multiple times to ensure it is fairly accurate. Captioning is allowed to leave out the uhms, uhs, or other hesitations/stuttering in the speaker’s speech. But major errors in spelling may indicate the captioning is not accurate enough. YouTube videos may not have any captions or may have many errors. If this is the case, consider alternate videos from other sources. In order for a video to be 508 and FCC compliant, the industry standard for video should have captioning that is 99% accurate.
* If you create your own video, *work from a prepared script*. In many video production programs, you are able to upload/include your transcript to become the closed captioning.

Short video clips are also better than those that are over 45 minutes. Students may not watch a longer video unless you have done a very good job of framing the content – telling students what to watch for perhaps, or including the video in an assignment so that they must watch in order to answer fully.

*Include the complete title, url, and length (time) of the video within the lesson Content Template when you submit your weekly deliverables.* If you have a video listed in the template longer than 30 minutes your ID will likely ask questions to verify you have vetted the video in its entirety. If longer than 30 minutes they may send you a form to explain the educational rationale for including the extensive video.

Assignments

List the assignments and tasks due for the week. Each assignment should be fully described with clear instructions and titles. Explain the relevance of assignments to the course work and objectives. Include a grading rubric if appropriate. Ask your instructional designer for samples if you have questions.

**Included automatically in every course are instructions on the mechanics of how to use discussion forums, how to take assessments, and how to submit assignments to the drop box. You do *not* need to recreate these instructions. But do be sure to include assignment-specific instructions.**

All of the assignments below are not required every lesson, but *do make sure that assignments demonstrate or provide a measurement of student skills and knowledge per the listed objectives*.

Readings  
List required and recommended readings for the lesson. Provide *chapter titles* and topics rather than just chapter numbers and avoid use of page numbers as much as possible. Provide current web links for any articles you want students to read online. Include links to any videos that students are required to view.

Discussions  
Ask questions to elicit the level of thinking and learning that you want. Well-defined questions help students to understand content and can guide them in elaborative and critical thinking about content. Be sure to explain the topics for discussion and what is expected of the student.

Provide titles for all discussion forums.

Ask questions designed to:

* Extract factual *knowledge*
* Query a student's *comprehension*
* Ask a student to *apply* his/her knowledge and comprehension
* Ask the student to *analyze* information
* Challenge the student to *synthesize* information
* Have the student *evaluate* and make judgments

The first lesson usually contains an introductions discussion where students introduce themselves to each other and the instructor. An example for the first lesson is shown below. You are welcome to customize the discussion to suit the needs of the course, as long as it serves the goal of helping students get to know one another and feel connected as part of a group.

Introduce yourself to your fellow students. Include information such as where you live, your undergraduate education, and what you hope to do after completing your coursework.

All other Discussions follow this format:

Title:

Initial Post: Ask a question(s) that does not require that students have completed all of the lesson readings (i.e. tell us about your experience with this topic, share what preconceived notions you may have about this topic, etc.)

Follow-up Post: Ask a question(s) that requires students to provide a substantial post and apply the principles and topics learned in this lesson, after having read all the assigned readings.

Response Post: If you want students to respond to their classmates’ posts, provide specific guidance concerning what those responses should contain.

Example:

Discussion 2.1 - Identify Local Health Equity (Title)

Initial Post (Due by Wednesday): After reading one of the APHA Health Equity Fact Sheets regarding heath inequity, environmental justice for all, or health and educational equity, post one example of inequity, similar to the article you read, that is relevant to the city, town, or community where you live.

Follow-up Post (Due by Friday): What programs or actions have been taken, if any, to combat the example of inequity you provided in your initial post? If no action has been taken, what program/action do you think would have a positive effect?

Response Post (Due by Sunday): Respond to one of the examples shared by one of your classmates. Evaluate the effectiveness of the program or action taken to overcome the inequity. What would you do differently to overcome the barrier preventing the targeted population from reaching their full potential?

Note that directions such as “make a substantive response” or “move the discussion forward” *DO NOT* provide adequate guidance to the students regarding discussion responses.

A Discussion Rubric is included in the LMS and you will be asked to review and verify its use *as is,* or if you wish to make customizations to the rubric to better suit your course.

Activities/Exercises

Graded or ungraded activities and exercises can be included. Exercises can be a great tool to reinforce key points. Exercises and activities don’t always have to be required and graded. Sometimes it is helpful to include activities (a practice quiz for example) as learning tools that don’t include the pressure of being completed for a grade.

List the graded assignments for the lesson (written assignments, group activities, etc.). Include a title and complete instructions for each activity/exercise. Include a clear description of requirements for the assignment (length, format, APA, etc.). Explain the relevance of assignments to the course work and objectives. Include a grading rubric if appropriate. Ask your instructional designer for samples if you have questions.

Assessments

List any tests or quizzes for the lesson. For each assessment, indicate which weeks or chapters are covered, a time limit, how many questions, what type of questions, and any other special instructions. Use these examples if you like and modify as needed.

This exam covers Chapters 1, 2, and 3. You have 75 minutes to complete the exam which is a mixture of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

This exam contains 50 multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions covering material from Lessons 1-3. You have 75 minutes to complete the exam.

*Note: Exams should contain material covered in previous lessons, but not in the lesson of the exam if possible.*

Project Tasks

List any tasks to be completed for multi-week projects and specify if anything is due. Use the Project Template to document all the descriptions, parameters, and due dates related to the project.

Section 508 and WCAG 2.0 Compliance

In 1973 the government of the United States set in motion a series of Civil Rights laws designed to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability.

Within the SME training and the Faculty accessibility training courses you have been given many resources to explore the history of the laws and the movement to greater accessibility for all.

While Blackboard claims 508 compliance, this compliance is in *functional accessibility areas* such as keyboard functionality, use of <alt> tags for buttons, or navigation features. *Use of the compliant LMS does not automatically ensure that content hung within the system is, in itself, compliant.* That compliance requires *authors of content* - in our case instructional designers *as well as subject matter experts* who supply content during course rebuilds, and of teaching faculty who may supplement content in their sections by uploading web based content – to be aware of, and comply with, applicable standards. The bottom line is that the content that Sullivan Online places within our LMS must be compliant.

We have identified some areas of concern. Those that may require the SME to resolve include:

* Handouts that have not been created, edited, and verified to be compliant
* Math formulas that are graphics or that may lack tags to make them readable (to a screen reader) – Blackboard uses MathML (see link below)
* Audio files/slide narrations without transcripts
* Videos without captioning
* Multimedia that may not have alternate representations/captioning, may have too many things going on at once, or do not meet all related guidelines

While all of these issues may impact the content you develop there are solutions to most of these issues. The SME training includes guidelines for developing handouts that are accessible to screen readers. Be aware that when using math formulas your ID may need your assistance in rendering these formulas accurately, such as knowing how the formula would be read aloud or having you create audio files for reading them aloud. Multimedia may also need alternate presentations, to be handled on a case by case basis.

[A Gentle Introduction to MathML: The Big Picture](https://www.dessci.com/en/reference/mathml/gitmml/big_picture.htm)

Projects

This document is where you fully describe a paper or project that spans multiple weeks.The project description includes the project objective(s), criteria for success, the steps necessary for completion, and milestones along with the weeks they are due.

The full project description page gives students one document that describes the entire project and all its requirements for completion. When writing the full description, it is often helpful to break down a project into smaller parts or phases. The items/tasks due in these phases should be listed both on the full project description and in each week that a task is due.

Following is an example of a full project description document taken from a macroeconomics course.

Macroeconomic Indicator Project Example

Objective

To research and explain one macroeconomic indicator and to apply your research to show its connection to the business cycle and economic policy. To learn about two additional macroeconomic indicators by reviewing a peers’ papers.

Process

The instructor assigns a macroeconomic indicator to each student. Distribution of the three indicators will be equal throughout the class to facilitate learning in the peer review process. You research this indicator and write about five topics related to it. You submit a draft of one section per week in Lesson 4 through Lesson 9, with the exception of week seven when you complete a peer review. Drafts of each section are due on Thursday of each week and the instructor will provide feedback and revisions by Sunday at noon of each week, with the exception of week seven when you will receive a peer review. It is your responsibility to incorporate feedback as you see fit by the time the next draft is due. The instructor will verify revisions have been made.  During Lesson 7, you complete a peer review of another student’s paper. You also receive a peer review from another student.

You submit your final paper on Wednesday of Lesson 10 and receive one peer’s paper on Friday of Lesson 10. Your peer review of those papers is due on Monday of Lesson 11. This paper accounts for approximately 40% of your grade. The rubric outlines what different components of the project are worth. Your paper must be at least four pages single spaced and no more than seven pages. The fonts permitted are Times New Roman size 12 and Calibri size 11.

Indicators

Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Unemployment/Non-farm Payrolls, and Consumer Price Index.

Section Outline

| **Item** | **Section Details** |
| --- | --- |
| Title and Subject | Your name:  Course number: Name of your indicator: Brief description: Submittal Date: |
| Section 1 | Define the indicator. Provide context for why the indicator is important to understanding the economy. Include at least two credible references and two news and popular press items from reputable sources that show how the indicator applies to the real world.   Draft due Thursday of Lesson 4. |
| Section 2 | Explain the history of the indicator and the rationale for its creation. Describe the source of the data for the indicator and how it is compiled. Summarize any issues, strengths and shortcomings.  Draft due by noon Thursday of Lesson 5. |
| Section 3 | Relate the indicator to Keynesian and Neoclassical economic theory. Explain how Keynesian economists view the indicator and how this viewpoint applies to the AD/AS model. Explain how Neoclassical economists view the indicator and how this viewpoint applies to the AD/AS.   Draft due noon Thursday of Lesson 6. |
| **Peer Review assigned Friday of Lesson 6.**  **Due Wednesday of Lesson 7.** | |
| Section 4 | Explain how the indicator applies to fiscal and monetary policy decisions.  Draft due Thursday of Lesson 8. |
| Section 5 | Analyze how the expansion and contraction of international trade might affect the direction of the indicator.  Draft due Thursday of Lesson 9. |
| **Final Project due Wednesday of Lesson 10**. | |
| Peer Review | Assigned Friday of Lesson 10.  Due Monday of Lesson 11. |

If your paper is one day late, 50% will be taken off the final score. No papers will be accepted past Thursday of Lesson 10. Timely submission is required to facilitate a timely completion of the final peer review.

Evaluation of Project

Answering all questions, drafts and revisions submitted on time, level of detail in analysis, with a particular emphasis on relating things back to the concepts in the lectures and text, peer reviews.

Assessments  
In 100- and 200-level courses, T/F and multiple choice assessments are acceptable measures of learning. In upper level courses, a student’s measure of knowledge should instead focus on critical and analytical thinking skills and synthesizing information. Provide assignments such as projects, papers, case analyses, and research as the basis for demonstrating knowledge.

Assessment Pools

To avoid delivering the same assessment quarter after quarter with the same questions, we like to take a few precautions against possible cheating. If you have an exam or quiz with 10 questions, develop a minimum of 5 extra questions so that there is a pool. If the exam consists of over 20 questions, develop a minimum of 10 extra questions. The system then randomly selects questions from the pool for each student. The questions do not appear in the same order for any 2 students, and the answers themselves are randomized for each question. This way, everyone receives a different exam.

If you use a pool then all questions should either be of the same difficulty level. Alternately you can segregate questions by levels clearly marked as easy, medium, or difficult so that the exams are set up properly. When possib;e organize questions by topic. Use a one or two word “keyword” to separate your questions into relevant topic areas.

The following table provides a recommended number of questions for using a pool:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Number of Questions in Assessment | Guideline Number of Questions for Pool |
| 10 | 15 |
| 25 | 40 |
| 50 | 70 |
| 75 | 100 |
| 100 | 125 |

For essay tests you should consider a pool as well; generally, a 30% increase or more in question number is recommended. For a 10 question test you would write 13 essay questions.

Question Writing Best Practices/Tips

Best practice recommends avoiding use of “None of the above” or “None of these” question answer choices. If you find yourself writing this type of question, consider using a Multiple Select question where students mark all answers that apply.

Here are some other tips:

* Test what matters
  + The more important a topic, the more questions it warrants
* Questions are related to objectives
* Students are given enough information to clearly understand what is expected
* All answer choices are plausible
  + Plural/singular wording is consistent – for example, when the question contains plurals, all answer choices should be plural
  + Correct answer is comparable to other answer options – the correct choice should not be so different from the other options as to make the answer obvious
* Complete sentences are used for questions
  + Questions end in period or question mark only
  + Avoid the use of colons at end of sentence
* Multiple Choice
  + Correct answer is not the longest, most detailed choice
  + Avoid "All/None of These" answers; instead, one or more plausible answers is correct
    - If one of these answer types is absolutely necessary, change "All/None of Above" to "All/None of These" since answers are randomized
* True or False
  + Not framed as questions; make a statement that is completely correct or incorrect and ends with a period
  + Avoid using indefinites and absolutes, such as often and always
* Short Answer and Essay
  + A clear model answer for instructors is provided

Use of all one question type in a test is rarely appropriate for all objectives in a course. Tailor the question type to the objective, e.g., if the objectives say “list…” then a short answer questions is appropriate whereas, if the objective says “describe…” an essay or short answer is required.

Question Formatting Protocols

Tests questions must be formatted according to specific protocols for proper display and functionality in Blackboard.

**Multiple Choice**

* + Question on a single line, following a number and a period.
  + Answer choices immediately following the question, one choice per line.
  + Asterisk (\*) in front of the correct choice.
  + Avoid “None of the above” or “None of these” answer choices, because they prevent you from using randomization of the choices.. Rather, consider a Multiple Select question where students mark all answers that apply.

Example:

1. Which of the following is a prime number?

a) 4

\*b) 5

c) 6

Alternate method:

MC

Which of the following is a prime number?

4

\*5

6

**True/False**

* + Question on a single line, following a number and a period.
  + Answer on the next line. Can be any of the following: T, t, True, TRUE, true, F, f, False, FALSE, false

Example:

1. 3 is a prime number.

True

Alternate method:

TF

3 is a prime number.

True

**Multiple Answer**

* + Same protocol as multiple choice, but with multiple answers marked as correct.
  + Question on a single line, following a number and a period.
  + Answers immediately following the question.
  + Asterisk (\*) in front of all correct choices.

Example:

1. Which of the following is a prime number?

\*a) 2

\*b) 3

c) 4

\*d) 5

Alternate method:

MA

Which of the following is a prime number?

\*2

\*3

4

\*5

**Essay**

* + This is simply a written question with no answer given.

Example:

1. Tell me your life story.

Alternate method:

ES

Tell me your life story

**Fill in the blank**

* + Begin your question with the keyword: blank
  + Type the question with a blank, following a number and a period.
  + Anticipate all forms of correct answers.

Example:

blank 1. Two plus two equals \_\_\_\_\_.

a. four

b. 4

Alternate method:

BL

Two plus two equals \_\_\_\_\_.

four

4

**Matching**

* + Begin your question with the keyword: match
  + Type the matching instructions, following a number and a period.
  + For each matching item, type a slash between the item and its matching answer

Example:

match 1. Match the chapters with their topics.

a) Chapter 13/Exception Handling

b) Chapter 16/File Processing

c) Chapter 10/OOP & Classes

d) Chapter 15/Chars, C-Strings, & the String Class

e) Chapter 12/Not covered in this class