

(PROPOSED) Leeward CC Distance Education (DE) Guidelines

The Distance Education (DE) Guidelines provide standards for designing a DE course. Refer to the annotations under each guideline for further information and examples. (Related: [DE Guidelines Self-Evaluation](#) and [DE Peer Evaluation](#))

COURSE DESIGN	
1	COURSE OVERVIEW AND INFORMATION
1.1	<p>Provide welcome, getting started.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome learners and provide context for what they will be learning, setting a tone for success from the start of the course. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish instructor presence and model voice and tone of interaction Provide guidance to ensure learners will get off to a good start in the online space. Explain how learners are to proceed when they first access the course. Guide learners through course learning materials and activities through visual clues and simple notations, like “start here”, and “before you move on” help.
1.2	<p>Provide course orientation, module orientations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify content rationale as well as the scope of work and expected time commitment. Provide an overview of the online course including what, when, where and why they will be learning, and an overview of each course module will provide information on, in advance, what content, interaction, and assessment will take place within a specific period of time. Include module orientation with at least a short introduction to the module topic and indicate what materials need to be reviewed, and what activities and assignments need to be completed. Include due dates for every assignment and activity in the module.
1.3	<p>Provide an online/printable version of syllabus.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep learners on track with information provided in advance alleviating the possibility for problems and obstacles. Create a syllabus in a format available for online download and printing.
1.4	<p>Include mandatory Leeward CC syllabi information and campus policies.</p> <p>Policies need to be communicated to online learners, with course links to associated learner services offices at the institution. Links should bring the learner to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy, in clear language. Guidelines on the policy, including how the policy is enforced. Contact information for policy related offices and personnel. Where to go for additional resources. Campus policies should address student conduct and academic integrity.
1.5	<p>Explain course policies.</p> <p>A clear explanation of course policies is provided and easy to understand.</p> <p>Course policies may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grading policy Late work submission Student conduct Communication
1.6	<p>Provide access to campus resources (technical help, orientation, tutoring).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link to campus resources for Distance Education students
1.7	<p>State whether the course is fully online or blended.</p> <p>Provide students with information about online readiness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Are You Ready to Learn Online?” (self-assessment)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Online Learning Orientation @ Leeward CC
1.8	<p>Explain communication methods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor communication policy is clearly stated. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How will your students communicate with you? ○ What is your response time? ○ How will students communicate with each other? ○ What is your preferred way for students to contact you?
1.9	<p>Ensure objectives/outcomes are easily located, clearly stated, measurable, and written from a learner's perspective.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives should be measurable and express some level of mastery that learners will need to demonstrate as a result of participating fully in the course. • All course content, learning activities, interactions and assessments should be in alignment with these objectives/outcomes. • Objectives should address what learners need to know when they complete the module, course, or program, and aligned activities and assessments should showcase how learners have achieved those objectives. • Objectives are written from a learner perspective to make it easy for learners to understand. • Objectives for the course or module are easy for learners to locate in the course.
1.10	<p>Provide instructor, department, and program contact info.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor, department, and program (if applicable) contact information is easy to find.
1.11	<p>Explain distinction between required and optional materials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The course contains an explanation of required and optional resources and materials. It is clear to learners which resources are required to complete course activities and assignments. Optional resources are clearly indicated.
1.12	<p>Provide instructor self-introduction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples include: a self-introduction video, forum post, email, infographic
1.13	<p>Ask learners to do self-introductions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples include: a self-introduction video, forum post, email, infographic
2	COURSE TECHNOLOGY AND TOOLS
2.1	<p>State technology skills and minimum technology requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any hardware, software, or technology applications that are required for successful participation in the course need to be introduced along with resources that support a full range of learner mastery. This information needs to be communicated to learners early on, and reinforced throughout the term.
2.2	<p>Include orientation/tutorials for technology skills required for learning activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor may create a personalized tutorial or provide links to existing tutorials.
2.3	<p>Link to tools' privacy policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners entrust the university with their personal information and expect that information to be protected. Web-based applications and other technology tools may be collecting data in the background, and learners need to be advised and know that their data is safeguarded. • Links to privacy policies are provided for all external website and services that require learners to create a username and password are provided. • Link to privacy policy of the Learning Management System (LMS) is provided.
2.4	<p>Ensure course tools promote learner engagement and active learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools available within the LMS are used to facilitate learning by engaging students with course content, each other, and the instructor.

2.5	<p>Ensure course technologies are current.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Course technologies are up-to-date ● Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Synchronous web conference tools ● Mobile application that supports learning and/or interaction Web-based collaborative platform (i.e. Google Docs, wiki) Blogs Online simulation software that demonstrates something ● The course utilizes tools in the LMS that supports learning objectives
2.6	<p>The technology and tools used in the course support the course learning objectives/outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The technology tools utilized in the course actively engage learners in the course material, facilitate interaction, and help learners achieve the course learning objectives and outcomes.
3 DESIGN AND LAYOUT	
3.1	<p>Ensure course layout and navigation is logical, consistent, and uncluttered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The online course should be designed so that learners can easily navigate and progress through a logical sequence and pace. This is achieved through consistency in layout and delivery of information types in regular order within learning modules. ● Organization is one of the most important parts of an online course. ● The key factor in organization of an online course is consistency — from the overall color scheme and page design to the layout and structure of learning modules, assignments, and rubrics. ● Redundancy (the same documents appearing in several locations) is recommended because repetition helps learners navigate easily to relevant information without having to search extensively.
3.2	<p>Ensure information is divided into manageable sections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reduce content to smaller “chunks” ● Organize course content into sections ● Utilize white space
3.3	<p>Write clear, unambiguous instructions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clear instructions help learners to function in the online environment without having to repeatedly ask for clarification. ● Instructions can be communicated in many different forms in an online course, including orientations, introductions, announcements, guidelines, rubrics, etc. (OSCQR)
3.4	<p>Text is easily readable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recommended: sans-serif, 12 pt or larger font used. ● Ensure text can be zoomed ● Ensure enough contrast between text and background
3.5	<p>Where applicable, use simple tables to display information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure all tables have a title and description ● Ensure table header rows and columns are assigned ● Avoid using merge-cells or complex tables
3.6	<p>Course materials are accessible to meet the needs of diverse learners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Videos are captioned or text transcripts are available ● All text (page, PDF, images) is readable by a screen reader ● Alt tags, captions, and transcripts are provided for all non-text content ● All text, graphics, and images do not use color as the only means of conveying meaning ● Format all text with titles, headings, and styles for accessible reading ● Avoid flashing or blinking text ● Use descriptive hyperlinks - Avoid “Click here.” Instead, identify the destination in the text. (e.g.,

	<u>Leeward Community College is a great school.)</u>
3.7	<p>Ensure tools meet accessibility standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Link to Laulima Accessibility ● Link to third party tools' accessibility statements ● If no accessibility statement exists, it is stated as such.
4	CONTENT AND ACTIVITIES
4.1	<p>Provide a variety of resources that facilitate communication, collaboration, learning, and engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learners benefit more from activities than from simple presentation of content. External readings, assignments, discussions, interactive web sites, online assessments (formative and summative) should all be connected clearly to mastering course concepts, and aligned with module, course, and program objectives. ● Relevancy to the course content is clear to learners. ● Opportunities for feedback on resources are included throughout the course. ● Learners need to know why they are required to read, review, discuss or create materials in the course. When they know reasoning behind what they need to complete, they will be more engaged.
4.2	<p>Ensure course content and resources use proper citations, copyright, permissions, and licensing info (including Creative Commons).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask a librarian for guidance on how to properly cite and use fair use materials.
4.3	<p>Course content and activities are aligned with course objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All course content, learning activities, and interactions should align with course objectives/outcomes.
5	INTERACTION
5.1	<p>Explain all instructor interaction and feedback.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The course provides learners with information on instructor response times, which include, but are not limited to: discussion postings, feedback on assignments, and grades. This information is easily accessible for learners.
5.2	<p>Explain all learner interaction expectations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A clear explanation of the instructor's expectations and requirements of learner interaction is provided to the students (frequency, length, response time, content, etc.). This includes, but are not limited to: discussion postings, assignments, peer evaluations, self-evaluations, group projects, etc.)
5.3	<p>Provide opportunities for students to get to know the instructor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Opportunities are varied in nature and scope and occur throughout the term.
5.4	<p>Provide resources and activities that build community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This may include, but are not limited to activities and resources which focus on self-expression or cognitive activities which focus on academic and professional goals.
5.5	<p>Provide opportunities for student-to-student interaction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Instructor as facilitator, moderating and evaluating the quality and quantity of interaction between learners. ● Group and peer-review assignments support social, teaching, and cognitive presences in the online space. ● Collaborative exercises enabling more advanced learners to help less experienced learners to maximize their abilities, and help construct new knowledge together.
5.6	<p>Provide opportunities for regular and substantive interaction between instructor and student.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ACCJC Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education ● Examples of student-instructor interaction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Follow-up questions on assignments

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Forum discussion posts that include instructor participation ○ Instructor provides a summary post for forum discussions ○ Instructor feedback on assignments ○ Course announcements that provide general feedback to learners ○ Synchronous chat ○ One-on-one synchronous meetings
5.7	<p>Learning activities provide interaction that support active learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Active learning involves learners engaging by "doing" something, such as discovering, processing, or applying concepts and information. Active learning entails guiding learners to increasing levels of responsibility for their own learning
6 ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK	
6.1	<p>Assessments measure course and/or module objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assessments are linked to course activities and measure learner mastery of course and/or module objectives.
6.2	<p>Provide regular and appropriate assessments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assessments are included at regular intervals ● Formative assessments that lead to summative assessments ● Assessments used are appropriate for the course content
6.3	<p>Provide clear assessment criteria for assignments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rubrics are recommended as a best practice for communicating criteria and achievement levels for assignments in online courses. They: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Make learning targets clearer; ○ Guide the design and delivery of instruction; ○ Normalize the assessment process; and ○ Give learners self- and peer-assessment guidelines.
6.4	<p>Provide opportunities for self-assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learners have opportunities to assess their own learning throughout the course determining what they've mastered, and detailing what needs improvement. It is a multi-faceted method of determining learner mastery, by asking learners to explore their own work, and determine a level of performance or mastery. ● Self-assessment plays a role in learner self-efficacy, fosters learners' abilities to construct meaning, and promotes metacognition. By asking learners to check their skill mastery levels, or reflect on their own work, they learn to examine their own reasoning and decision making process (Cukusic et al, 2014).
6.5	<p>Setup online gradebook for students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● By providing easy access to an up-to-date gradebook, the instructor gives learners the ability to check in on their progress continuously throughout the course term. The added functionality and reporting features enable the instructor to review and analyze the gradebook, as well as create reports on learner progress and course completion.
6.6	<p>Provide at least one opportunity for descriptive feedback on all aspects of course.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This may include, but is not limited to the course evaluation via Course Evaluation System (CES).

The "[Leeward CC Distance Education \(DE\) Guidelines](#)" were based on recognized best practices from:

- [Quality Matters](#)
- [SUNY Center for Online Teaching Excellence](#)
- [UHM College of Education, Department of Learning Design and Technology](#)