

OFFICE OF ONLINE LEARNING

Instructional Design Basics

COMMIT TO
INNOVATION.



UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA
Online Learning

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INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to provide high-level instructional design ideas and inspiration to faculty working to create courses. Each framework, strategy, and approach in this document has a body of literature associated with it. This document should be thought of as a gateway into investigating and implementing innovative instructional design.

Frameworks provide a structured approach for pursuing course objectives. The frameworks presented here can be used in combination with one another and might incorporate different strategies from the next section.

LEARNING DESIGN FRAMEWORKS

Community of Inquiry

The community of inquiry model encourages students to participate in teacher-led authentic investigations as a driver of education. This model strongly acknowledges the interdisciplinary and fallible nature of knowledge. For more information, see <https://bit.ly/uga-ool-coi>

Community of Practice

Communities of practice are focused around a specific craft. This concept is particularly useful in courses where (a) students are focused on production or action, (b) the goals of the course are flexible enough for students to help define them, and (c) knowledge sharing amongst participants is seen as beneficial. For more information, see <https://bit.ly/uga-ool-cop>

Problem-Based Learning

Problem-based learning engages students in an open-ended process of developing solutions to problems that are important to the domain being studied. This approach encourages students to be active in the learning process as they engage with course content using real-world scenarios. For more information, see <https://bit.ly/uga-ool-pbl-2>

Case-Based Learning

Case-based learning uses real-world scenarios to encourage engagement with realistic domain-specific situations. Students work, often collaboratively, to construct solutions for the case. Cases can range in their complexity, but they often present ill-structured problems in order to more closely mirror real-world scenarios. For more information, see <https://bit.ly/uga-ool-cbl>

Universal Design for Learning

Universal Design for Learning promotes the development of flexible learning environments that give learners choice in how to acquire knowledge, demonstrate understanding, and find motivation. For more information, see <https://bit.ly/uga-ool-udl-2>

Writing Across the Curriculum

Online courses can provide students with multiple and varied opportunities to demonstrate knowledge via writing in private, public, and semi-public venues. Additionally, the steps in the writing process can be put into practice deliberately to help students become better written communicators. For more information, see <https://bit.ly/uga-ool-wac-2>

Strategies are used to achieve course goals. While these strategies do have bodies of research around them, they are often situational and embedded within the larger context of course design.

LEARNING DESIGN STRATEGIES

Gamification

Amplify your course using the principles of collaboration, competition, achievement, and engagement. Gamification borrows from the design of various games (e.g., video games and board games) to make learning more dynamic. For more information, see <http://bit.ly/uga-ool-gamify-2>

Group Work

Having students work collaboratively can lead to rich discussion, critical thinking, and superior learning outcomes. Structuring group work to move beyond cooperation and facilitate collaboration is essential to success. For more information, see <https://bit.ly/uga-ool-grp>

Didactic Learning

Didactic learning promotes the transmission of knowledge from the instructor to the student, often via lecture. In the didactic environment, the instructor can expose student to an expert's thinking -- filling in gaps left behind by textbooks. For more information, see <https://bit.ly/uga-ool-lecture>

Metacognitive Strategies

Metacognitive strategies encourage students to become aware of their own understanding their progress towards achieving objectives. For more information, see <https://bit.ly/uga-ool-meta>

Peer Review

Using peer review on your online course gives students an opportunity to engage with the work of their classmates in order to provide meaningful feedback. When structured correctly, this activity can help students see new ideas to improve their own work while helping foster skills of evaluation and communication. For more information, see <https://bit.ly/uga-ool-peer>

Guided Practice

Guided practice provides scaffolding for learner who are practicing a new skill or putting new knowledge to use. During guided practice, students are asked to complete tasks with the direct and immediate support of the instructor. For more information, see <https://bit.ly/uga-ool-gp-2>

Assessments provide evidence of student progress toward learning outcomes and inform instructor decisions. Regular and varied assessments contribute to the learning experience.

ASSESSMENT

Formative Assessment

Offer students immediate feedback that they can use to improve their learning experience. Instead of simply providing a grade, instructors help students identify strengths and weaknesses. Formative assessments help with planning remediation activities and facilitating communication about difficult concepts.

Formative Examples

- Self-Assessments
- Study Guides
- Knowledge Checks
- Problem Sets
- Journals / Portfolios
- Group Presentations
- Reflective Activities

Authentic Assessment

These assessments focus on applying concepts that students have learned to real world situations and requires them to complete meaningful tasks. This type of assessment engages a variety of skills and measures higher levels of learning than traditional assessments. Authentic assessments can be general or domain-specific. If your students can create something, then it can probably be used as an authentic assessment.

Authentic Assessment Examples

- Case Studies
- Lab Reports
- Grant/Research Proposals
- Media Projects
- Podcasts
- Portfolios
- Journal Article
- Business Plan
- Experiential Learning
- Software Production
- Art Production
- Group Critique
- Interviews
- Role Playing
- Technical Report
- Policy Brief
- Debates
- Open Publishing

Summative Assessment

Used to determine whether or not a student has achieved stated learning objectives and reached the desired level of mastery. These assessments typically occur at the end of a module, unit, or course.

Summative Examples

- Quizzes/Exams
- Online Presentations
- Websites
- Portfolios
- Group Projects
- Papers/Essays

Our goal is to ensure that all learners can access your course materials. The two synergistic methodologies that will guide our efforts are accessibility (WCAG 2.0) and Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

ACCESSIBILITY

WCAG 2.0

The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) provides four guiding principles to guide creating accessible content:

Perceivable

Information and user interface components must be presentable to users in ways they can perceive. This means that users must be able to perceive the information being presented (it can't be invisible to all of their senses).

Operable

User interface components and navigation must be operable. This means that users must be able to operate the interface (the interface cannot require interaction that a user cannot perform)

Understandable

Information and the operation of user interface must be understandable. This means that users must be able to understand the information as well as the operation of the user interface (the content or operation cannot be beyond their understanding)

Robust

Content must be robust enough that it can be interpreted reliably by a wide variety of user agents, including assistive technologies. This means that users must be able to access the content as technologies advance (as technologies and user agents evolve, the content should remain accessible). For more information, see <http://bit.ly/uga-ool-wcag>

Universal Design for Learning

Universal Design for Learning applies three principles to positively affect learning; "what", "how", and "why" of learning:

"What" is being learned

Present content in ways that engage students on multiple cognitive levels.

"How" content is being learned

Provide options for students to organize and express their knowledge.

"Why" learning is occurring

Create and maintain motivation in learners by providing multiple options for engaging.

For more information, see <http://bit.ly/uga-ool-udl>

ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility Considerations

Images

Ensure that all image have Alt Tags and that these are descriptive.

PDFs

Identify any existing PDFs that are images and help identify options for generating text based alternatives.

Video and Audio Content

All media must be captioned. Media can be captioned manually by college personnel or contracted through a third party with coordination from OOL.

Text Content

Ensure text content is chunked into digestible paragraphs with clear, ordered structure using formatting styles.

Course Structure

During the design of your course, organize the instructional-flow in a way that is both structured and logical.

Course Activities

Identify and develop options for course activities that encourage learners to engage in multiple competencies.

Color

Make color choices that are beneficial to learning and help all learners.