

Quality Online Course Development Using Quality Matters

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Abstract

Distance education has become an accepted method of course delivery because it allows students to engage in a course and to complete the course without being required to attend campus-based courses. It also allows those who may not otherwise be able to attend a campus-based course to seek further education. It allows the students to continue to work as they work toward completing their education. Because of this advantage, statistics reflect that there are currently 53.9 percent of today's students ("Fast Facts," 2017) enroll in at least one distance education course.

Research indicates that developing an online course requires attention to detail. In an effort to develop quality online courses, Quality Matters, a nationally recognized, faculty-centered, peer-to-peer review process has been adopted by the Assessment & Institutional Effectiveness in an attempt to develop quality online courses and to support assessment efforts (Quality Matters, 2011). The application for an assessment grant was granted to purchase Quality Matters for the Tech campus. Included in the grant was funding for several faculty and staff to complete up to two certifications through Quality Matters. I completed the Applying the Quality Matters Rubric and the Peer Review certification. Currently, a course is being created based on the Quality Matters Rubric. Previously, the course was created based on the Blackboard Rubric. Statistics will be gathered at the end of the semester for the online course to compare student satisfaction, grit, and student completion. It is the hope that these statistics will reveal that an online course based on the Quality Matters Rubric will reflect greater student satisfaction, grit, and persistence. Statistics from the online course based on the Quality Matters Rubric and the previous version of the course based on the Blackboard Rubric will be compared

and contrasted. Furthermore, the online course based on the Quality Matters Rubric will provide stronger assessment information.

Purpose

The purpose of this proposal is to investigate using the Quality Matters Rubric to develop a quality online course. Student satisfaction, grit, and persistence will be identified. Statistics from this course will then be compared to the same course that was developed using the Blackboard Rubric. In addition, assessment information will be improved for the online Quality Matters course. “Quality Online Course Development Using Quality Matters” will be presented during a session at the United States Distance Learning Association’s annual conference. The conference is scheduled April 29, 2018 through May 2, 2018, in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Objectives

- Determine if an online course developed using the Quality Matters Rubric reveals greater student satisfaction.
- Determine if an online course developed using the Quality Matters Rubric reveals student grit.
- Determine if an online course developed using the Quality Matters Rubric reveals student persistence.
- Investigate assessment information to determine the assessment information for both the QM Rubric course and the Blackboard Rubric course.

- Present a session at the United States Distance Learning Association at its annual conference scheduled for April 29 – May 2, 2018. The session is entitled, “Quality Online Course Development Using Quality Matters.”
- Conduct research during spring 2018 semester.
- Publish a research paper based upon the findings.

Significance/Need

Developing a quality online course should be an ongoing process. Research reveals that Quality Matters, a nationally recognized, faculty-centered, peer-to-peer review process is the best rubric to use in developing the online course (Quality Matters, 2011). Student satisfaction, grit, and persistence are all traits that will be investigated in an attempt to determine the better rubric. There is a need to understand the correlation between creating a quality online course and student satisfaction, grit, and persistence. The session that I will present, “Quality Online Course Development Using Quality Matters,” at the United States Distance Learning Association will involve attendees discovering a new rubric to use to create a better online course. In addition, an article that reports the results will be submitted for publication to the *Quarterly Review of Distance Education* journal.

Process for Attainment of Objectives/Goals

1. Provide an opportunity for attendees at the United States Distance Learning Association, in my session, “Quality Online Course Development Using Quality Matters, to actually see the statistics for student satisfaction, grit, and persistence in an online course that was developed using the Quality Matters Rubric.

2. Discuss online course development for Quality Matters Rubric and the Blackboard Rubric.
3. During the spring 2018 semester, I have one section of a mixed technology course that has previously been taught. The current course will be developed using the Quality Matters Rubric. The previous version of the course was developed using the Blackboard Rubric.
4. Complete an IRB application during spring 2018 to investigate and research the course statistics based on the Quality Matters Rubric and the course based on the Blackboard Rubric.
5. Once the semester has ended, the data will be analyzed and a paper will be submitted to the *Quarterly Review of Distance Education* for possible publication.

Dissemination of Results

Results will be disseminated in the following ways:

1. During a session at the United States Distance Learning Association, attendees will be presented results for a course based on the Quality Matters Rubric and the same course that was developed using the Blackboard Rubric.
2. An article with the results will be sent to the *Quarterly Review of Distance Education* for possible publication.

Conclusion

Embracing Quality Matters for online course development was not a quick decision. The process spanned a 2-year period which consisted of extensive research trying to locate the best

method upon which to base online course development. Once a decision was made that Quality Matters was the ‘winner,’ several faculty and staff on ATU’s campus completed the Quality Matters Rubric. Others, myself included, completed the next certification with QM, Peer Reviewer. To support the adoption of Quality Matters, several faculty developed a section of an online course based on the QM Rubric. Throughout the spring semester of 2018, weekly meetings were held to support faculty who had created a course based on the QM Rubric. Test cases were discussed.

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Dr. Loretta Cochran and I applied to the United States Distance Learning Association Conference to present Tech’s process of adopting QM. Furthermore, tying Quality Matters to assessment and accreditation was also discussed. Tying Quality Matters to ‘grit’ was also discussed. Approximately 20 attendees attended the session. A rich dialogue resulted. Questions were addressed as well as comments and suggestions from the audience were recorded by us. Of the 20 attending, approximately 6 remained after the session to ask specific questions that revolved around what methods we had used to attract faculty to the QM process. Four of the 6 asked to receive our research, which was emailed to them. After the conference, the USDLA emailed the attendees’ rating sheet for the session. All were rated as Excellent!

The goal for 2019 is to again prepare a proposal for the United States Distance Learning Association's conference where we plan to update the 2018 presentation. Actual statistics from our courses will be presented. In addition, additional certifications, ABC's of QM Research and Master Reviewer, will be discussed.

References

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