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How to evaluate a syllabus for an online course.

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The online environment is fundamentally different than a face-to-face course room. Therefore, to develop an effective and solid course, online courses must be fundamentally different and not just a brief adaption of a face-to face course syllabus.

Traditional course syllabus are commonly supplemented with in person discussion in the classroom and during office hours. In contrast online courses often need to be completed weeks before classes start, supplemental material is often given in announcements or emails, and academic freedom can conflict with course continuity. Chairs are tasked with guiding faculty around pitfalls and providing directions on how to use tools efficiently so that programs, faculty, students, and courses can be current and interactive in their delivery of content, while also building a sense of community.

This session focuses on reviewing a traditional course syllabus and examining what fundamental changes need to be made to adapt it to be an effective online course, while maintaining course competencies and content. The focus of the presentation is not the technical aspects associated with a course development included in an evaluation method such as that done by Quality Matters, Certified Online Instruction, and Sloan C. (MarylandOnline, 2014) This presentation will focus on the evaluation of the syllabus to determine the potential for success of course materials to an online delivery format. Utilization of the syllabus and other common tools to deliver instruction such as discussions, assignments, and different methods of delivering course content will also be explored.

From this session chairs will have increased their awareness of what to look for between the lines of a syllabus. They will also have a better understanding of how to use online tools to reach course and program objectives. Finally attendees will gain an awareness of how course development timelines and demands impact content.

MarylandOnline. (2014). *Higher Ed Program Rubric*. Retrieved July 17, 2015, from [qualitymatters.org: https://www.qualitymatters.org/rubric](https://www.qualitymatters.org/rubric)