

## *Online Teacher Competencies*

### **Introduction**

This document is a production of the Educational Technology Committee, a subcommittee of CCVPA. Its production represents a new effort on the part of the ETC to leverage the knowledge and experience of its members.

The development of the Online Teacher Competencies initially stemmed from a face-to-face facilitated brainstorming session with the ETC Committee on October 29th 2009. During this session, the ETC Committee created a list of agreed-upon terms and definitions and developed a list of quality characteristics for various configurations of technology-supported teaching/learning formats, and then brainstormed a list of provincial competencies for faculty facilitating technology-supported teaching/learning. After this meeting, a sub-committee was tasked with further developing the Provincial Online Teacher Competencies. Meeting synchronously through the use of online tools the sub-committee conducted a literature review of current research in the area of online teacher competencies and worked together to identify common themes that were developed into six main categories of competencies. The sub-committee then composed specific competency statements for each category and identified appropriate performance indicators.

A complete formula for successful learning would see the faculty competencies coupled with effective instructional design. The issues and aspects of instructional design are beyond the scope of this document.

For purposes of this document, a competency may be defined as:

“the knowledge, skill, attitude or ability that enables the online teacher to effectively perform a function to some standard of success’ (Ragan, 2009).

This compendium of competencies and accompanying performance indicators represents a comprehensive list of desirable characteristics and behaviors for professional educators teaching online. It is recognized that the overall objective of online teaching is to create, manage, evaluate and modify accordingly, the best possible learning environments for students. While it is expected that the teacher will consider all of the competencies listed in determining an appropriate teaching strategy, not all of the identified performance indicators will be present in every condition. Rather than providing a proscriptive list of requirements, this document is intended to help review and evaluate considerations necessary in developing appropriate online approaches.

It should be noted, that the competencies and performance indicators were developed for faculty teaching in a Post Secondary educational setting. They may change over time in response to new learning modalities that evolve from new trends and technologies.

The competent online teacher demonstrates the following:

<p><b>Professional Development</b></p>	<p><b>Competency</b></p> <p><b>1. Remains current with best practices in facilitating online learning</b></p> <p><b>Performance Indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Makes continuous efforts to develop knowledge, skill and currency related to integration of new technologies, resources and evolving learning environments</li> <li>• Seeks opportunities to experiment with new technologies in ongoing development of innovative practices</li> <li>• Seeks ongoing feedback from students and incorporates feedback as part of making course improvements</li> </ul> <p><b>Competency</b></p> <p><b>2. Develops technical literacy required for online learning environments</b></p> <p><b>Performance Indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectively manages a course management system</li> <li>• Explores new media and analyzes its relevance for supporting the online learning</li> </ul>
<p><b>Engagement &amp; Interaction</b></p>	<p><b>Competency</b></p> <p><b>3. Incorporates learning activities that encourage active learning, interaction, participation and collaboration in the online environment.</b></p> <p><b>Performance Indicators</b></p> <p><b>A. Engagement/Interaction with Course Materials</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Links all activities to the course outcomes</li> <li>• Promotes engagement with course materials/content through logically sequenced units of study.</li> <li>• Invites interaction with course materials through activities that support making connections to prior knowledge and real life situations.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides opportunities for discovery learning and learner co-creation of content and resources</li><li>• Provides opportunities during and at the end of a unit of study for learners to summarize and reflect on their learning</li><li>• Where applicable, provides for application of learning to a real world context</li><li>• Offers a variety of ways to interact with content through text, audio, video, images, simulations, animations, kinesthetic activities etc.</li></ul> <p><b>B. Engagement /Interaction with Other Learners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where appropriate, creates opportunities for cooperative/collaborative activities through, for example, a discussion forum, or blog, or wiki tool or other types of social media.</li><li>• Where appropriate, encourages peer support by, for example, setting up a buddy-system and encouraging formation of study groups</li><li>• Clarifies expectations for student behavior online including Discussion groups</li></ul> <p><b>C. Engagement /Interaction with the Teacher</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Posts clear messages in straightforward, standard language</li><li>• Establishes a variety of ways to meet with learners online (e.g., discussion forum, live chat, email, videoconference, telephone).</li><li>• Sets clear expectations for teacher-learner communication.</li><li>• Provides information to students regarding teacher availability and response time (e.g. within 48 hours on business days)</li><li>• Facilitates online discussions effectively</li><li>• Creates activities that incorporate the student experience</li></ul>
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### Competency

#### 4. Establishes a social presence online

### Performance Indicators

- Introduces self and responds to student introductions
- Creates a social presence in activities using a variety of strategies and tools (e.g., text, audio, and video, e-mail, discussions, announcements, social media, mobile devices etc.)  
e.g. Posts at least once per discussion topic, where appropriate
- Accesses the course on a frequent basis (every 1-2days)
- Communicates with students on a regular basis
- Recognizes students social needs online and responds appropriately in an a positive, encouraging manner
- Posts meaningful questions or ideas to encourage critical thinking where discussion begins to wane

### Competency

#### 5. Fosters the development of a learning community

### Performance Indicators

- Encourages student introductions as a means of fostering a learning community
- Creates an inclusive environment that is respectful of diversity
- Assists students with collaborative participation in groups
- Encourages student to student contact and exchange
- Promotes an environment that fosters a sense of mutual enquiry
- Facilitates discussions effectively

### Competency

#### 6. Assesses learning using a variety of tools and strategies that are aligned with the course outcomes

### Performance Indicators

- Provides clear instructions for assignments, grading policy and submission process

<p><b>Assessment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides variety and choice in assignments in recognition of diverse ways of learning and cultural expression</li> <li>• Provides rubrics for assessment activities</li> <li>• Provides timely feedback to students on assignments and assessments</li> <li>• Where applicable, develops authentic assessments that relate to real world experiences</li> <li>• Monitors student progress in the course through tracking, DG postings, assignment submission etc.</li> <li>• Uses appropriate tools for student's self-assessment</li> <li>• Seeks ongoing feedback from students regarding course experience, and makes adjustments where appropriate</li> </ul>
<p><b>Learner Support</b></p>	<p><b>Competency</b></p> <p><b>7. Uses college resources and designs course activities to support learners throughout their learning experiences, including identifying and managing learners at risk.</b></p> <p><b>Performance Indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides an inclusive accessible learning environment that respects and supports cultural diversity, diverse learning needs and styles</li> <li>• Compensates for lack of visual and auditory cues</li> <li>• Uses orientation and learning strategies that reflect requirements of online learning environments</li> <li>• Provides detailed orientation to course features, course requirements, course navigation etc.</li> <li>• Provides extra time for orientation and adjustment to the online environment; avoids graded assignments for the first few weeks of the course</li> <li>• Provides opportunity for students to master technologies needed for course participation</li> <li>• Meets accessibility requirements for course tools and media</li> <li>• Refers students to support resources within the college system e.g. provides instructions related to accessing electronic databases</li> <li>• Encourages learners to think about their own thinking</li> <li>• Provides clear direction related to technical support</li> <li>• Describes methods for accessing academic resources such as electronic databases</li> <li>• Describes methods for accessing student support services.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resources &amp; Materials</b></p>	<p><b>Competency</b></p>

	<p><b>8. Uses learning materials that are appropriate for the curriculum, the students, and principles of effective online instruction</b></p> <p><b>Performance Indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates online course materials as required e.g. Ensures that links work, course materials are current</li> <li>• Continues to seek out new strategies and resources as changing needs of students occurs</li> <li>• Makes meaningful use of multi-</li> <li>• Presents course materials in a consistent and organized manner taking into account the level of the learner</li> <li>• Ensures copyright permission has been obtained when using resource materials</li> <li>• Annotates resource links</li> <li>• Appropriately cites resource material used in course</li> <li>• Where applicable, includes the use of scholarly electronic resources</li> </ul>
<p><b>Course Management</b></p>	<p><b>Competency</b></p> <p><b>9. Manages online student activities and has a clear ability to make effective, educational uses of course management tools.</b></p> <p><b>Performance Indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates competent use of technology and software required for the course experience</li> <li>• Manages time to enable prompt responses and feedback to students</li> </ul>

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