



eLearning ACUMEN

January 2017

a newsletter from the Office of Online & Extended Learning at MSUM

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The Transformative Power of the Self

by Julie A. Zaloudek, Ph.D.

Beginning a new year often makes me reflective of people who have contributed to who I am as a person and as a professional person. I think about my freshman year of college and Dr. Libby Newman from Intro to Sociology. She was the first person I had ever met who called herself a “feminist,” and given the attitudes of my community, I found it a little surprising that anyone would admit that! In one of her lectures she told a story of her husband ice-skating, and how she was in absolute admiration of his ability and form. In the course of telling the story, she blurted out, “That’s my man!” - looked reflective for a moment, and mused out loud, “Hmm. That would make me ‘his woman,’ which falls on my ears differently than ‘my man.’ I’ll have to think on that more.” She rallied from her thoughts and continued with the example, connecting it to some sociological concept that I no longer recall.

Twenty-four years later, I am astounded at how much she taught me in those ten seconds.

I learned that it is important to stop and reflect upon our words and ideas. I learned that it is OK to be open about our own contradictions, as we sort through them. I learned that being authentic is not a threat to being respected. I learned that grappling with “not knowing” is a sign of strong intellect and character.

Her passion for sociology and teaching thrilled me. I couldn’t get enough because of *her*. Who she *was* relentlessly challenged my biases and assumptions. I loved her and am immensely grateful for how much she taught me.

As I reflect on my last seven months as Dean of Online and Extended Learning at MSUM, I am struck by countless gestures and inspiring moments with the people I have met – the faculty who have sat with me and shared their vision, the deans who model professionalism and commitment, the ITS and IT staff who make my office space joyful, the students who unfailingly hold doors open for me when my hands are full, the group of men who play trivia outside of Dragon Café and interact good naturedly with passersby, our president and leadership who

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demonstrate an unwavering commitment to our core values, and so many who provide services to students with a passion and constancy that touches me.

We bring our experience, knowledge, competencies, and skills to the task of educating, and they are all important. But I propose that who we *are* is more impactful than what we *do*. It is our *selves* that provide the richest opportunities for learning, as Dr. Newman taught me. I think this is good news for us at MSUM because, while I am impressed with the competency of people I have met, I am even more impressed with the character of people I have met.

Albert Einstein said, "Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school." We are all educators in some respects, but there is something especially motivating to be serving the *cause* of education – developing people. I am both proud and humbled to be a co-educator with you at MSUM and look forward to working together in 2017! (https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/topics/topic_education.html)



“IT’S IN THE SYLLABUS!

It’s clear you didn’t read the syllabus, did you Johnny?!”

While you hopefully don’t yell at your students to go read the syllabus, you likely have wondered if students in your course took the time to read it. If you are using D2L Brightspace you can, at minimum, see if a student has accessed/looked at the syllabus you’ve posted.

“Ok. It appears he read it but Johnny obviously didn’t understand it!”

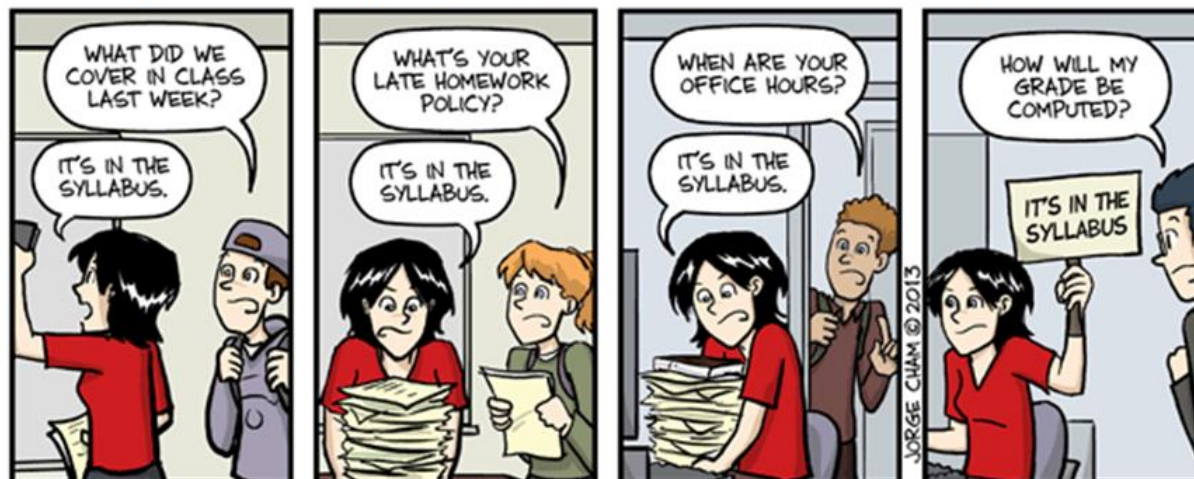
Just as you use an assessment to determine if students have mastered the learning objectives for your course, why not assess their understanding of the syllabus?

Ok. But I don't want to waste class time for this...

D2L Brightspace makes it easy to release only particular areas of a course once a specific task has been completed. Some instructors have found it helpful to attach a release condition to a syllabus quiz that requires students to achieve a grade of 75% or higher before being able to access other areas of the course.

Piled Higher and Deeper by Jorge Cham

www.phdcomics.com



IT'S IN THE SYLLABUS

This message brought to you by every instructor that ever lived.

WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM

title: "It's in the syllabus" - originally published 5/10/2013

If you spend a lot of your time repeating and explaining things from the syllabus, consider a syllabus quiz. Members of the Online & Extended Learning team would be happy to help you set this up so you and your students get off to a good start!

For further exploration:

- [Using a syllabus quiz to reinforce expectations](http://bit.ly/zhRisI6)
http://bit.ly/zhRisI6
- [Teaching Online Pedagogical Repository: Syllabus Quiz](http://bit.ly/zhRdXgu)
http://bit.ly/zhRdXgu
- [TeachOnline ASU: Sample Syllabus Quiz Questions](http://bit.ly/zisLmBS)
http://bit.ly/zisLmBS



PD Picks

Light up your learning!

Workshops, Webinars & More

Webinars: D2L Brightspace, Teaching Strategies, & Quality Matters (QM)

Free webinars, covering a variety of topics, are running multiple sessions now through April. Space is limited, so [register for these FREE webinars](https://mnquality.eventbrite.com) today! (<https://mnquality.eventbrite.com>)

Topics include:

- Setting Clear Expectations with the Rubric Tool
- Game-Based Learning
- Increase Student Engagement with Discussion
- Feedback Techniques & Tools in D2L Brightspace
- Organize Your Content
- Preparing for Your QM Course Review
- Creating Engaging Recorded Lectures
- Simple Strategies to Improve Learning and Accessibility in your D2L Brightspace Course
- Creating Recorded Lectures with Mediaspace
- Advanced Features of the Announcement Tool
- Using Wiggio with D2L for Student Collaboration
- Designing Accessible Course Materials
- Keeping Your Students Organized with Checklists
- Online Synchronous Tools
- Open Discussion on Open Educational Resources
- Bored? Not Anymore. Learning Activities that Rock!
- Dynamic Discussion Artifacts: Moving Beyond Threaded Discussion in an Online Course

Online QM Workshops:

Applying the QM Rubric (APPQMR)

February 21 – March 7, 2017
(Registration closes Feb. 14)

This online, asynchronous, 2-week workshop is QM's flagship workshop. It is intended for those who wish to gain a deeper understanding of the QM

Rubric and process of course review. (Cost is \$40.**)

[Workshop details](https://qm.northlandcollege.edu/registrations/register/7lgZQ8LCPR/): <https://qm.northlandcollege.edu/registrations/register/7lgZQ8LCPR/>

Improving Your Online Course (IYOC)

March 28 – April 11, 2017
(Registration closes Mar. 21)

The IYOC is a 2-week online, asynchronous workshop. It explores the QM Rubric, examining 21 essential standards. Participants come away with a plan for course improvement. **Prerequisite:** must have an existing online course to examine during the workshop. (Cost is \$30.**)

[Workshop details](https://qm.northlandcollege.edu/registrations/register/7lgZQ8LCPR/): <https://qm.northlandcollege.edu/registrations/register/7lgZQ8LCPR/>

Registration fees can be paid by the Office of Online & Extended Learning. [Email](mailto:catherine.artac@mnstate.edu) catherine.artac@mnstate.edu **prior to registration to request a P.O. number and registration details.

Conferences

STAR Symposium

February 10, 2017, online

This virtual one-day conference will focus on pedagogical approaches for face-to-face, blended, flipped, and online classrooms.

[STAR Symposium](http://bit.ly/STARSymposium) details: bit.ly/STARSymposium

Brightspace MN Connection

April 21, 2017, Bloomington, MN

Sessions will feature best practices in instructional design, technology integration, and teaching within D2L Brightspace.

[Brightspace MN Connection](https://www.d2l.com/events/regional/minnesota/) details: <https://www.d2l.com/events/regional/minnesota/>

MN eLearning Summit

August 2–3, 2017, Bloomington, MN

Sessions will focus on eLearning tools, resources, services and best practices.

[MN eLearning Summit](https://cceeevents.umn.edu/minnesota-elearning-summit) details: <https://cceeevents.umn.edu/minnesota-elearning-summit>

Accessibility Tip: *Did you know?*

Creating a map of your document using Heading styles...



You probably wouldn't attempt a road trip without a map to direct your way. Similarly, a person who uses assistive technology due to low- or no-vision depends on a map to direct their way through your document.

One way you can offer a map of your document is by structuring the content using **Heading Styles**. Using the built-in heading styles in Microsoft Word not only provides a visual cue to the structure of your content but can also be used for navigation purposes. Readers using a screen reader can easily jump to the section they wish using keyboard commands.

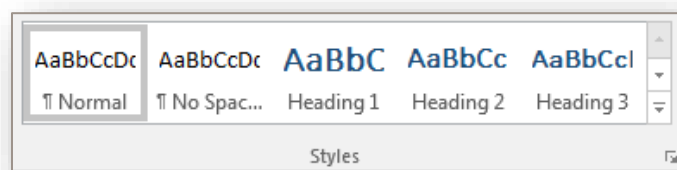
Be sure to use the built-in heading styles in the correct order to structure your content into an outline format. Heading 1 is your document title. Use Heading 2 for each main section and Heading 3 as a sub-module under one of the Heading 2 sections.

The built-in heading styles can be found on the Home tab in Microsoft Word.

To enter a heading, first type your heading text and press **Enter** (or on a Mac, press **Return**). Make sure you are displaying the Home Tab. Select the heading text. From the Styles group, click the heading level style that you wish to use (for example, Heading 1). Use **ONLY** the built-in heading styles of Heading 1,

Outline Type:	Style:
Document title	Heading 1
Text	Normal
Section 1	Heading 2
Text	Normal
Section 2	Heading 2
Text	Normal
Sub-section 1	Heading 3
Text	Normal
Sub-section 2	Heading 3
Text	Normal

Heading 2, Heading 3, and so on otherwise a screen reader will not recognize the text as a heading. For a video on formatting your document with headings see [MS Word: Headings](https://youtu.be/8ttx2wTESWg) (https://youtu.be/8ttx2wTESWg) offered by Portland Community College.



Unfortunately, the light blue color used for the built-in headings in Microsoft Word is not accessible due to its low contrast. We highly recommend you modify the heading styles to a darker color and perhaps add bolding so they are easier to read by your sighted readers. Refer to the instructions titled [Creating an Accessible Template in Microsoft Word](http://tinyurl.com/hwdgyvw) (http://tinyurl.com/hwdgyvw) offered by Portland Community College.

Have you ever wondered how a person using a screen reader can navigate and read your digital documents? Penn State Behrend offers a short demo using the JAWS screen reader at [Screen reader demo: Headings and Links \(Jaws\)](http://tinyurl.com/gsj4n58) (http://tinyurl.com/gsj4n58).

QM Tip: Addressing Standard 2.2

Specific Standard 2.2 states, “*The module/unit objectives describe outcomes that are measurable and consistent with the course-level objectives.*” *

Learning objectives establish the foundation upon which a course is built. General Standard 2 of the Quality Matters Rubric addresses the necessary components of learning objectives. While Specific Standard 2.1 focuses on course-level learning objectives, [Specific Standard 2.2](http://bit.ly/2iax3TO) (<http://bit.ly/2iax3TO>) looks at **module/unit-level objectives**. This standard specifically addresses the inclusion of **measurable** module-level learning objectives that are **consistent** with the course-level objectives.

Measurable

Module-Level Objectives (MLOs) should precisely describe what students are to be able to do as a result of the activities and materials in their corresponding module. This involves selecting action verbs for your MLOs that correspond with the evidence students will be presenting to you of their mastery of the module content.



Example MLO: *By the end of this module, students will be able to describe the relationship between carbon dioxide level and photosynthesis.*

The verb “describe,” can be measured by multiple means, for example, via a writing assignment, illustration, or via discussion.

Consult [Bloom’s Taxonomy](http://bit.ly/2jArw9H) (<http://bit.ly/2jArw9H>) to find the best verb for each objective and cognition level. Ensure that the verb you select matches the method you will use to assess student learning. Using measurable action verbs such as those presented in Bloom’s Taxonomy to design objectives:

Informs the **students**:

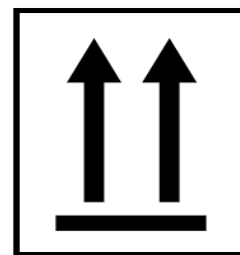
- what they should study
- how they will be assessed

Guides the **instructor**:

- in assessment strategies
- in teaching strategies

Consistent

MLOs are more precise, than Course-Level Objectives (CLOs), measuring competency in a specific task or skill. As you design a course, the MLOs impact the methods used to assess student learning in each module of your course. However, they should also align with the CLOs, working collectively to help students achieve the overarching course goals (CLOs).



Demonstration of the consistency/alignment of the MLOs and CLOs can be achieved in multiple ways: a matrix, list, numbering/lettering system, or narrative. (Sample [Course Mapping Matrix](http://bit.ly/2jAB9oQ) from Berkeley Law: <http://bit.ly/2jAB9oQ>)

For more resources on writing learning objectives, visit the links below:

- [Articulate Your Learning Objectives](http://bit.ly/2iYWCoo)
<http://bit.ly/2iYWCoo>
- [Revised Bloom’s Taxonomy](http://bit.ly/1pcPJBV)
<http://bit.ly/1pcPJBV>
- [Writing Effective Learning Objectives](http://bit.ly/2iB9anF)
<http://bit.ly/2iB9anF>
- [Course Development & Learning Outcomes](http://bit.ly/2ibk8x7)
<http://bit.ly/2ibk8x7>

* As with each of the QM Standards, be sure to read the Annotations provided in the QM Rubric Workbook to make sure you have a clear understanding of the Standard before proceeding.

If you don’t have a copy of the QM Rubric Workbook Fifth Edition (2014), request a copy by sending an [email](mailto:its@mnstate.edu) to its@mnstate.edu.

D2L Private Discussions

Do you want a private dialog with each of your students to get to know them better?
How about a private, ongoing space to provide feedback or tailor information specific to their needs?

The Discussion tool within D2L Brightspace can be easily configured to automatically create the space and structure for these private, one-on-one discussions.

The MN State D2L Support team has provided [instructions](https://d2l.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/1567) (https://d2l.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/1567) that outline the setup process.

If you want to discuss the merits of private discussions or need help setting up discussions, contact the Office of Online & Extended Learning at support@mnstate.edu or call 477-2603 option 3.



Office of Online & Extended Learning

also known as *Instructional Technology Services*

203 Livingston Lord Library

 <https://www.mnstate.edu/instructional-technology/>

 Phone: 218.477.2603 option 3

 support@mnstate.edu

 @ITSmsum



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