

INTERNATIONAL LEARNING UNIT (ILU)

CRITERIA TO MEASURE ONLINE LEARNING



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USE TWO CRITERIA TO MEASURE ONLINE LEARNING

The outcome based ILU measurement for distance education, such as online courses, is superior to the time based CEUs. Some advantages in the online setting:

- You cannot, and should not, measure time spent online;
- In the online environment, time has no relationship to learning. Increasingly what is valued are the learning outcomes, not the time put in.
- With the outcome based ILU measurement, there are benchmarks and real learning standards that can be measured.
- With the outcome based ILU measurement, you have data on which to improve your online courses.

Here's a feasible way to initiate ILUs and transition to ILUs for your online courses.

CRITERIA ONE QUIZZES

Build online quizzes into your online courses.

Most online classroom software already have the online quiz templates already built in. You simply provide the content (questions and answers).

Here's how online quizzes work.

- Learners can take the quizzes anytime, or you can designate the days or even times when someone should take the quiz.
For the sake of convenience, it is recommended that learners be able to take the quizzes anytime.
- The 'computer' - your online classroom software, has the capability to automatically grade the quizzes, providing the teacher with the results, and providing the learner (if you wish) with the results immediately.
- The simplest online quiz design is multiple choice, but you can build in short answer, True-False, or even essays online.

How to create ILU quizzes.

1. Divide your online course into modules or units.
2. Develop an online quiz for each module. To be consistent with the ILU standard, compose each quiz of 5 questions.
3. Start by creating multiple choice questions. You will find multiple choice questions contain plenty of sophistication and require much thought.
4. You or your instructor develops five questions for each module. Then compose the correct answer.
5. Now write a number of wrong answers. Each multiple choice question should have 4 or 5 possible answers.
6. Review your questions. You are doing a pre-assessment and self-evaluation of your questions. After around 50 people have taken the course, you will have much better data on your quiz questions. But at this point you are thinking about:
 - Are these the core, most important, questions that reflect the critical information provided in the course?
 - Are there any essential or critical subject areas left out? Are there any non-essential or merely "nice to know" questions that should be replaced by questions on more important material?
7. If your online classroom software has a quiz feature built-in, you or your instructor can input the questions and answers. If not, have your techie create the online quizzes.
 - Consider allowing participants to retake the quiz if they did not pass the first time. This lowers stress levels and increases acceptance of the outcome based standard.

CRITERIA TWO DISCUSSION

The second criteria for successful completion of your online course that most online instructors use is discussion comments.

For each module or unit, the participant is required to make one or two substantive comments in the online discussion

A "substantive" comment relates to the content of the course. It can be an original comment or a reply to someone else's comment.

If the participant has made a comment in 4 out of the 5 module or discussion units, then this criteria is met for ILUs and passing the course.

When a participant both:

1. Passes the quizzes (80% correct or greater); and
2. Makes a comment in 4 out of 5 of the discussion modules, then the participant has passed the course and is awarded ILUs, CEUs, or whatever units you use.

Time Equivalency

How many ILUs are awarded can initially be ballparked using time equivalency. That is, an online course that generally takes around 10 hours of time is awarded 1.0 ILUs.

As providers adopt the ILU outcomes based standard, time equivalency will eventually fall by the wayside and units will be awarded based on the content rather than time input. Until you feel comfortable with that begin with a time equivalency.

By transitioning to the ILU outcomes based standard, your evaluation of online course participants will gain credibility for learning outcomes. You will also have a wealth of data and information about your online courses and learners on which to build and enhance the quality of your online courses.



For more on the International Learning Unit (ILU), go to <http://www.LearningUnit.org>