



Process Name • CNM Framework for Quality Assurance for Courses with an Online Component

Overview of CNM Framework for Quality Assurance for Courses with an Online Component

Purpose: As CNM's online course offerings grow and mature, it is important to create a comprehensive framework to assure quality in courses with an online component.

Rationale for creating a comprehensive framework for quality assurance in courses with an online component:

1. Serves the learning needs of our students by continuous improvement using research-based best practices in quality online course and program design
2. Strengthens CNM's Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) journey and is in line with the expectations of the Higher Learning Commission regarding the quality and integrity of our online courses
3. Is in line with CNM's mission to be a leader in education and training.

The CNM Framework for Quality Assurance in courses was adopted in 2017/2018. There was attention to the issue of the "standardization" of course design and the pedagogy of online course. A policy was deemed necessary to demonstrate that we meet accreditation and NC-SARA requirements for quality. Tools like course templates, which lead to greater standardization, can be practical for faculty and an efficient and effective way for institutions to ensure that quality criteria are met.

The use of master courses is another tool to provide more standardization when there are multiple sections of the same course. However, there is no inherent contradiction in being internally consistent in the structure or design of online courses that provide a common navigational framework for students and supporting faculty control over objectives, methods, content, and assessment.

This, in turn, allows institutions to utilize tools and processes, in addition to those just listed, to ensure quality criteria are met. For example, the CNM Brightspace Course Shell allows for basic consistency of navigation in courses with an online component. Additionally, consistent application of QM standards ensures that learner-centered criteria for quality are embedded in every course and section.

CNM's framework for quality assurance in online courses is based on commitments to:

- (1) quality standards
- (2) academic freedom
- (3) shared decision-making across schools, and within departments, to determine the best and most consistent curricular design
- (4) shared responsibility among faculty, and academic support personnel, for ensuring quality standards in online courses
- (5) professional development of faculty teaching online
- (6) consistent experiences for students to enhance student success across courses

CNM Way Expert: Executive Director, Innovation & Instructional Support

Functional Units Involved: Academic Affairs – Innovation & Instructional Support

Beginning of Process: Identify and develop all forms necessary for the implementation of the CNM Framework for Quality Assurance in Courses with an Online Component

End of Process: Review of CNM Framework for Quality Assurance in Courses with an Online Component policy by Faculty Senate and Academic Affairs Council.

Definitions:

CNM Brightspace Course Shell: The CNM Brightspace course shell provides an easily navigable structure for learners, which is in alignment with Quality Matters standards and best practices for online instruction. Tools such as: getting started, module outcome templates, overview outcome templates and module checklists are available for all courses built in Brightspace and those using the Innovation & Instructional Support collaborative design process.

CNM Faculty Self-Review Process: Faculty teaching a course with an online component (online, hybrid, real-time online, blended or attend anywhere) will participate in the CNM Faculty Self-Review process. All courses with online components will be reviewed every 3 years. The review is a collaborative process between the faculty members and the Innovation & Instructional Support Teaching and Learning staff. The self-review worksheet is available as a resource to faculty at any time. The Self-Review process should also be used at the completion of course development and/or to initiate the process of an optional Quality Matters course certification.

Innovation & Instructional Support uses a collaborative Design & Curriculum

Development process: The process employs a collaborative team process for design and redesign between faculty and IIS staff, including Instructional Consultant(s) and Learning Experience Designer(s). Redesign includes activities such as, but not limited to, changing, modifying, or editing assignments, exams, projects, etc. See the full design/re-design process [here](#).

QM Certified Course: A course that has met QM Standards, assessed using the QM Rubric, in an Official Course Review. Once certified, courses can display the QM Certification Mark to demonstrate their commitment to quality and continuous improvement.

Faculty Online Certification 1 & 2: All faculty who teach a course in CNM with an Online Component are required to be certified to teach online. The type of courses that are taught determine what level of certification is required, i.e., Certification 1 and 2.

Fast Track Online certification: This is for individuals with extensive experience with teaching online. This is an accelerated certification version that combines components of Online Certification 1 & 2. This is a credit for prior learning certification opportunity. A faculty member's CV is provided by Dean or Associate Dean and Director of Design and Curriculum Development. A course shell is established for the new faculty member has 14 days (about 2 weeks) to complete the requirements.

CNM Consensus Course

1. Courses utilize the CNM Brightspace Course Shell.
2. Courses are designed using the QM Essential Standards.
3. The course design process utilizes the Collaborative Process for Design and Redesign.
4. Courses follow the 3-year cycle of the CNM Faculty Self-Review process.

5. Faculty teaching this course type must have completed TLOL 1010, Faculty Online Certification 1 or the Fast Track online certification facilitated through IIS.
6. Consensus courses can be modified in the following areas:
 - a. Instructor-specific policies, for instance, late submission of assignments policies.
 - b. Instructor personalization related to welcome, introduction, grading policies.
 - c. Instructor policies such as availability, communication preference, turn-around times for email, discussion board involvement, and return of graded assignments.
7. If the consensus course has been officially certified by QM, it will need to meet the [QM requirements for multi-section courses](#). If there are questions regarding updates or changes to a multi-section course, contact IS@cnm.edu.
8. Consensus course lists are maintained by the Quality Assurance Manager and confirmed with each Academic school. All consensus master shells are designated with –M at the end of the course name.

CNM Template Courseⁱ

1. Courses utilize the CNM Brightspace Course Shell.
2. Courses are designed using QM Essential Standards.
3. The course design process utilizes the Collaborative Process for Design and Redesign.
4. The individual instructor follows decisions made by the Collaborative Team Process, and approved by the department, that identify aspects of the course which may be modified up to 50%.
 - a. Greater than 50% of the course content remains consistent as aligned to existing department guidelines articulated in the master syllabi.
 - b. Modifiable aspects may include:
 - i. Items that can be modified with a consensus course
 - ii. Supplementary materials
 - iii. Major assessments
 - iv. Sequence of topics, organization of course
5. Faculty using the Template Course, with no modifications beyond those made in a consensus course, must have completed TLOL 1010, Faculty Online Certification 1 or the equivalent.
6. Faculty modifying the Template Course must have completed TLOL 1015, Faculty Online Certification 2 or the Fast Track online certification facilitated through IIS, or the “Applying the QM Rubric” (APPQMR) training.
7. If the template course has been officially certified by QM, modifications would be needed to meet the [QM requirements](#). If there are questions regarding updates or changes to a multi-section course, contact IS@cnm.edu.
8. Template course lists are maintained by the Quality Assurance Manager and confirmed with each Academic school. All template master shells are designated with –M at the end of the course name.

CNM Individual Course

1. Courses utilize the CNM Brightspace Course Shell,
2. Best Practices are that courses should be designed to meet QM Essential Standards. Courses are designed using QM essential standards.
3. Courses are created by an individual faculty member or utilize components of the Collaborative Process for Design and Redesign. [À la carte services](#) for course enhancement are available to support course enhancement at the faculty request.

4. Faculty that creates or uses an Individual Course must have completed TLOL 1015, Faculty Online Certification 2 or equivalent.
5. If the individual course has been officially certified by QM, modifications would need to meet the [QM requirements](#). If there are questions regarding updates or changes to a multi-section course, contact IS@cnm.edu.
6. Course shells developed by faculty to be used as a resource for those who teach individual courses, are available for copy and use are designated with –R at the end of the course name. The course shell name and the course contact are kept on the CNS/TEM list. The course contact is responsible for updating the shell. If the resource course shell has a Self-Review or Course Re-Design, the Quality Assurance Manager will email course contacts for permission to copy new content into shell of record.

Related Documents and Forms:

1. [CNM Quality Matters](#)
2. [CNM Self-Review Checklist](#)

Process:

Faculty Qualifications to Teach Each Course Type

1. Faculty using a Consensus Course, or unmodified Template Course, must have completed TLOL 1010 or Faculty Certification 1 or equivalent.
2. Faculty who works create a modified template course, or an individual course, must have completed TLOL 1015 or Faculty Certification 1 & 2, or equivalent.

Policies

1. Program-level decisions resulting in classifications of CNM Consensus Course and Template Courses adoption will
 - a. be made collaboratively by discipline faculty and administrators, and
 - b. consist of review and revision by a collaborative sign team (IIS and faculty) and reviewed using the self-review process on a 3-year cycle.
 - c. will limit modifications to course classifications to one time per year and only during the summer term. Dean or Dean Designee will notify the Quality Assurance Manager of modifications via email. Exceptions will be made for changes due to regulatory or accreditation needs.
2. For online courses not addressed by program-level decisions, full-time discipline faculty will determine which course type (CNM Consensus, CNM Template, or CNM Individual) will be used for discipline courses using a defined process.
 - a. All consensus and template courses will have an individual or team designated by the school and communicated to the IIS team as the course contact to resolve course questions.
 - b. Modifications to course classifications will be limited to one time per year and only during the summer term. Dean or Dean Designee will notify the Quality Assurance Manager of modifications via email. Exceptions will be made for changes due to regulatory or accreditation needs.
3. All courses with an online component (except for face-to-face courses) shall be reviewed using the CNM Faculty Self-Review process every 3 years.

4. If a course is designated as IND, and faculty have not completed Faculty Certification 2, disciplines should designate a Consensus course shell to be used by faculty. Faculty will adhere to the guidelines for instruction of use of a CNS shell.
5. Course copy requests for CNM Consensus courses should be submitted in a bulk request from a department leader, or course designee, each term.
 - a. All consensus bulk copy requests should be submitted to IIS at least three weeks before the upcoming term to allow faculty time to personalize and update courses during the intersession.
 - i. The Quality Assurance Manager will send a reminder for bulk copies 5-6 weeks prior to the beginning of each new term.
 - b. Bulk copies will be processed in the two weeks preceding the upcoming term.
 - c. All Innovative Programs courses are submitted on a bulk copy request each term.
 - d. The designated course of record on the CNS/TEM list is the only course that should be used as a source course.
6. Course copy requests for CNM Template courses must be requested in a bulk request from a department leader, or course designee every Fall term. Faculty should work with the department leader or course designee for guidance on template course copies in the Spring and Summer terms.
 - a. All Template bulk copy requests must be submitted three weeks before the Fall term.
 - b. Bulk copies will be processed in the two weeks preceding the Fall term.
 - c. The designated course of record on the CNS/TEM list is the only course that should be used as a source course, which is the course that is copied from.
7. Course copy requests for CNM Individual courses will be processed on a term-by-term basis.
8. The list of consensus and template courses shall be kept by the Quality Assurance Manager and should be confirmed and updated to ensure proper classification of consensus and template courses with each school.
 - a. The list will be organized and distributed via email through a shareable link by Academic school with Innovative Programs and Online College courses on their own sheet.
 - b. The list will include the name of the course designee for each course in notes.
 - c. Courses that complete the collaborative design process, self-review or Quality Matters certification will be designated as the new course of record for consensus and template courses. The Quality Assurance Manager will email the course contact, Dean or Associate Dean to confirm the replacement of current content with new content. All consensus and template source courses will use a course that contains all components of the CNM Brightspace classroom.
 - d. The list of consensus and template courses will be sent to Deans and Associate Deans 2-3 weeks prior to the beginning of each term. Many share the consensus and template list with others such as chairs, directors, course contacts within the schools to determine if the course shell information, course classifications, and course contacts are accurate. If changes are needed, Academic school leadership will notify Quality Assurance Manager of any needed changes.

Implementation Plan

Phase I (AY 2017-2018):

1. Identify and develop all forms necessary for the implementation of the CNM Framework for Quality Online Courses.
2. Disciplines complete part of the DL Course Inventory Form, identifying current approach used and approach that will be adopted, for each discipline course offered online. This will be submitted to the designated school administrator.
3. The school administrator, in collaboration with the DL office, will complete the part of the DL Course Inventory Form that identifies any faculty certified to teach CNM Individual Courses, and/or to modify CNM Template Courses, for those disciplines in which these approaches are adopted. This will be submitted to the DL office.
4. The DL office will complete the part of the DL Course Inventory Form that identifies the most recent date of an Internal QM Review, and the proposed date for the upcoming QM Internal Review, for all CNM Consensus and Template Courses. A copy of this will be submitted to the school administrator.
5. The school administrator will work with discipline faculty to (1) identify faculty who need certification to teach a CNM Individual Course, and/or to modify a CNM Template Course, as well as certification timelines, (2) identify CNM Individual Courses that can be used as a Template Courses (as appropriate), and (3) develop a timeline for designated faculty to be trained as QM Peer Reviewers in those disciplines adopting a CNM Individual Course approach.
6. Academic Affairs will identify a budget and timeline for supporting faculty to complete APPQMR and QM Peer Reviewer training.

Phase II (AY 2018-2019):

1. All faculty using a CNM Individual Course or CNM Template Course will have a completed QM Self-Assessment Checklist on file when requesting their course copy.
2. All disciplines using CNM Individual Courses will submit a schedule of the Internal QM Reviews of these courses, including the faculty responsible.

Phase III (AY 2020-2021)

1. Review and revision of CNM Framework for Quality Online Courses policy by DLAC, Faculty Senate and Deans Council.
 - a. Review of process took place in 2020 and was determined that streamlined improvements needed to be made to ensure quality in online, hybrid, blended and attend anywhere courses.
 - b. CNM faculty approved a self-review faculty checklist that will be completed for all courses in the above formats on a 3-year basis.

Phase IV (AY 2022-2023)

1. Review and revision of CNM Framework and wording to include changes related to the Reimagining Academic Affairs process and changes in certification options for teaching online.
2. IIS piloted and implemented a self-review faculty checklist that will be completed for all courses in the above formats on a 3-year basis.
3. Include details and faculty support related to the creation of the Collaborative Process for Design and Redesign.

Phase V (AY 2023-2024)

1. Review and revision of wording to include changes in certification options for teaching online to specifically include the IIS Fast Track online certification as a CPL (Credit for Prior Learning) opportunity for those who have previous experience.
2. Modifications to the policies on the process related to copying consensus and template courses, course of records, maintenance of the consensus and template list and to capture the process for course copies related to Innovative Programs.

Other related information:

1. The consensus and template course list shows all courses that are designated as consensus and template and will be provided to school leadership prior to the beginning of each term.
2. The consensus and template course list includes all courses by school, discipline, course offering name and code and course contact or designee.
3. Faculty certifications are accessible through the Faculty Certification dashboard (SAS).

Created: 01/2018. Reviewed by DLAC, Faculty Senate 01/2018.

Reviewed/updated (Department & staff names, titles, and CNM Self Review process):

08/2020. Reviewed by DLAC 08/2020, Reviewed by Faculty Senate and Chair Council 09/2020

Reviewed/updated (RAA changes, language updates, department names and titles):

04/2022. Approved/reviewed Academic Affairs Council 05/2022, Reviewed by DLAC 06/2022, Reviewed by Faculty Senate 07/22, Reviewed by Chair Council 07/22.

Reviewed/updated (Fast Track as CPL, updated language for Consensus and Template course use and course copy language): 08/2023. Approved/reviewed Academic Affairs

Council 08/2023, Reviewed by DLAC 8/2023, Reviewed by Faculty Senate, Reviewed by Chair Council 9/2023.
