

Email of person filling out this Initial Proposal *

sarah.ubel@washburn.edu

Title *

Systematically Utilize Quality Matters to Enhance Online Education

Problem / Opportunity Statement *

Students in Washburn University's online courses encounter a range of positive and negative practices. Washburn is a Quality Matters Subscriber Institution but there is no standardized training for faculty teaching online, no standardized course shell, or no quality standards for design or implementation.

Select one quality initiative sub-theme. *

Faculty Transitions

Sub-theme description. *

Online faculty would benefit from training related to online pedagogy that is grounded in research and best practices.

Faculty should be required to complete training regarding teaching courses online utilizing the Quality Matters rubric. This training should be required of all faculty teaching online to prepare them for the challenges of the online course environment.

Additionally, a standardized course shell should be designed to assist faculty in meeting some of the basic Quality Matters standards. Components of the basic shell framework would include an explanation about course design, weekly course folders for course content, the creation of a basic course map, etc. This will aid faculty teaching for the first time online by giving them an initial framework which will meet best practices standards. Using a standardized shell will also enhance student's ability to learn and persist in classes because online course organization will be consistent throughout the university.

Finally, faculty should be given monetary incentives for meeting QM standards for each online course they teach. Evaluating each online course would be a tremendous step to ensure the quality of our online courses. Faculty who take the step to achieve QM Certification should be rewarded.

Benefits *

To systematically use Quality Matters at Washburn University, all faculty teaching online will be trained to teach online according to QM, a nationally recognized best practice. Faculty benefit from the three components of QM: The QM Rubric, the Peer Review Process and QM Professional Development. Faculty receive professional development regarding important components of a certified Quality Matters course, a rubric to guide the course development, and a peer review process which offers objective feedback on progress. Additionally, consistent organization, the course shell, will enable faculty to focus more on the content rather than organization. Students would know what to expect and would be more likely to learn and persist in an online course. Courses that have been peer reviewed and evaluated according to the QM rubric ensure our online courses are meeting the quality that is befitting a Washburn University course.

Scope *

Receiving the distinction of achieving the status of a Quality Matters Institution, ensures that each Washburn online faculty member has the resources and skills to be an effective online teacher. By receiving this designation, Washburn University would have an additional recruiting tool to use when promoting our online opportunities. The scope of this initiative touches each faculty member who is currently or desires to pursue teaching an online class. Teachers of blended courses can also benefit from the available training and standards afforded the university as it strives to earn the Quality Matters Institution designation. All students enrolled in courses with an online component would be assured that the online courses in which they are enrolled meet certain standards accepted by the University.

1st Stake Holder's Organization / Department	All faculty and students
Primary Contact's Name	Sarah Ubel
Primary Contact's Department / Unit	Communication - CAS
Primary Contact's Email	sarah.ubel@washburn.edu
Primary Contact's Phone Extension	2235