

Formal Evaluation and Subject Matter Expert Summary Report



Maine is IT!
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
A CONSORTIUM OF MAINE'S SEVEN COMMUNITY COLLEGES

DGD221

*Submitted to Maine is IT in fulfillment of the
TAACCCT grant requirements*

*By
Emporia State University*

EMPORIA STATE
UNIVERSITY
■ INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

May 5, 2017

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Course Review for: Maine is IT
Course: EMCC: DGD221 - Typography
Reviewed by: Joseph Kern
Date: 5/5/17

This review is based on the course syllabus, Final Project, and assignment document that were shared for review.

Part 1: Course Review

A. Course Review & Introduction (16 points total)		
1.1 Instructions made clear how to get started and where to find various course components.	3	1
1.2 Learners are introduced to the purpose and structure of the course.	3	3
1.3 Etiquette expectations (sometimes called “netiquette”) for online discussions, email, and other forms of communication are clearly stated.	2	0
1.4 Course and or institutional policies with which the learner is expected to comply are clearly stated, or a link to current policies is provided.	2	1
1.5 Minimum technology requirements are clearly stated and instructions for use provided.	2	1
1.6 Prerequisite knowledge in the discipline and/or any required competencies are clearly stated.	1	1
1.7 Minimum technical skills expected of the learner are clearly stated.	1	0
1.8 The self-introduction by the instructor is appropriate and is available online.	1	0
1.9 Learners are asked to introduce themselves to the class.	1	0
	Total	7
Comments:		
<p>1.1: The syllabus does not provide instructions on how students should get started in the course and access the Blackboard page. There is one reference to the online “DGD 221 Handout Area” when discussing class requirements. Adding a link to this page and would help students navigate there.</p> <p>1.2: The purpose of the course is stated clearly and succinctly in the syllabus. The structure is described clearly in the syllabus, supported by the activities and sequences described in the assignment documents.</p> <p>1.3: Etiquette expectations (sometimes called “netiquette”) for online discussions, email, and other forms of communication should be covered. <i>Examples include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sensitive to the fact that there will be cultural and linguistic backgrounds, as well as different political and religious beliefs, plus other differences in general. • Use good taste when composing your responses in Discussion Forums. Swearing and profanity is also part of being sensitive to your classmates and should be avoided. Also consider that slang can be misunderstood or misinterpreted. • Don’t use all capital letters when composing your responses as this is considered “shouting” on the Internet and is regarded as impolite or aggressive. It can also be stressful on the eye when trying to read your message. • Be respectful of your others’ views and opinions. Avoid “flaming” (publicly attacking or insulting) them as this can cause hurt feelings and decrease the chances of getting all different types of points of view. • Be careful when using acronyms. If you use an acronym it is best to spell out its meaning first, then put the acronym in parentheses afterward, for example: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). 		

After that you can use the acronym freely throughout your message.

- Use good grammar and spelling, and avoid using text messaging shortcuts.

1.4: Course and institutional policies adequately cover EMCC support resources, classroom policies, attendance, makeup work, etc., but the important area of academic dishonesty was not addressed. The Maine Community College Student Code of Conduct could be listed as a reference for students, and a hyperlink to it would support student navigation.

1.5: The primary technologies are Adobe Illustrator and InDesign, but students will also be utilizing Dropbox and other supplemental tools. These are listed within broader class requirements, but there is no area specifically addressing technology requirements.

1.6: The only listed prerequisite skills are that students know (or learn) how to backup and organize stored files. Nothing addresses prerequisite knowledge of typography or graphic design.

1.7: Minimal skills are not listed. As a 200-level course, it may be assumed that students at this point in the program have already gained skills in Adobe Illustrator/In-Design, but listing out a few minimum competencies would be helpful for students to see.

1.8: No introduction is given in the syllabus. It is recommended that a section of the Blackboard course include an instructor bio to serve as a personal introduction to the students.

1.9: Nothing in the syllabus indicates that students are asked to introduce themselves. Especially with the amount of critique used in this course, a collegial rapport among students is important. Beginning with an introduction among students can help build this relationship.

B. Learning Objectives & Competencies (15 points total)

2.1 The course learning objectives, or course/program competencies, describe outcomes that are measurable	3	3
2.2 The module/unit learning objectives or competencies describe outcomes that are measurable and consistent with the course-level objectives or competencies.	3	1
2.3 All learning objectives and competencies are stated clearly and written from the learner's perspective.	3	3
2.4 The relationship between learning objectives or competencies and course activities is clearly stated.	3	2
2.5 The learning objectives or competencies are suited to the level of the course.	3	3
Total		12

Comments:

2.1: The course learning objectives are measurable, using action verbs that indicate what actions of students will be assessed.

2.2: Unit-level outcomes are not listed in the syllabus or other materials. While not identified as the objectives, many assignments begin with strong (and visually-distinguished) statements of what the students will be doing: "Identify..." "Design...", etc. In other assignments, a simple topic may be listed, with the exact task identified in the body of text below. It is recommended that the tasks are explicitly identified as objectives, in a consistent manner. .

2.3 : Objectives are written from student perspectives.

2.4: It is clear that the content covered in each activity aligns with course objectives, but the connection between the two could be stronger. If clear links between the activity objectives and the course objectives can be made, students will gain a better understanding of the overall purpose of each activity, beyond the immediate task being completed

2.5: Objectives are appropriate for the course level, as students will engage in a great deal of evaluation and refinement.

C. Assessment & Measurement (13 points total)

3.1 The assessments measure the stated learning objectives or competencies.	3	3
3.2 The course grading policy is stated clearly.	3	3
3.3 Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of learners' work and are tied to the course grading policy.	3	3
3.4 The assessment instruments selected are sequenced, varied, and suited to the learner work being assessed.	2	2
3.5 The course provides learners with multiple opportunities to track their learning progress.	2	2
<i>Total</i>		13

Comments:

3.1: Assessments adequately measure the course objectives. Criteria are listed, which fall under the course outcomes.

3.2: Course grading policy is clear and succinct.

3.3: Quite specific criteria are provided to guide students in their work, and weighting of each criterion is given at the assignment level, along with the overall course grading weights.

3.4: Assignments and assessments are structured to align with the course content and help develop student abilities through the course, with a variety of creative challenges.

3.5: The nature of the work provides many opportunities for students to be shown their progress and gauge whether they understand content. The inclusion of peer critiques for the student projects more than adequately provides relevant, timely feedback.

D. Instructional Materials (13 points total)

4.1 The instructional materials contribute to the achievement of the stated course and module/unit learning objectives or competencies.	3	3
4.2 Both the purpose of instructional materials and how the materials are to be used for learning activities are clearly explained.	3	3
4.3 All instructional materials used in the course are appropriately cited.	2	2
4.4 The instructional materials are current.	2	2
4.5 A variety of instructional materials is used in the course.	2	2
4.6 The distinction between required and optional materials is clearly explained.	1	1
Total		13

Comments:

- 4.1:** The instructional materials listed in addition to the assignment documents include the required textbook and a fascinating website that will contribute to student achievement of the objectives.
- 4.2:** Purpose and use for materials is emphasized in the Requirements/Expectations portion of the syllabus.
- 4.3:** Materials listed are properly cited in the syllabus.
- 4.4:** The textbook's publishing date is 2004. With the accompaniment of the blog, which includes content dated in 2017, the materials remain up-to-date for the topic.
- 4.5:** The syllabus indicates that a variety of instructional formats will be used to meet the needs of a variety of students.
- 4.6:** No materials are specified as being optional.

E. Course Activities and Learner Interaction (11 points total)

5.1 The learning activities promote the achievement of the stated learning objectives or competencies.	3	3
5.2 Learning activities provide opportunities for interaction that support active learning.	3	3
5.3 The instructor's plan for classroom response time and feedback on assignments is clearly stated.	3	0
5.4 The requirements for learner interaction are clearly stated.	2	2
<i>Total</i>		8

Comments:

5.1: Activities engage students in activities described in the objectives, so they are designed to promote achievement.

5.2: Students are expected to participate in class activities, which include peer critiques.

5.3: No plan is provided for classroom response time or assignment feedback.

5.4: Guidelines are given to help students conduct themselves appropriately in class, as well as how to appropriate participate in discussions.

F. Course Technology (10 points total)

6.1 The tools used in the course support the learning objectives and competencies.	3	3
6.2 Course tools promote learner engagement and active learning.	3	3
6.3 Technologies required in the course are readily obtainable.	2	1
6.4 The course technologies are current.	1	1
6.5 Links are provided to privacy policies for all external tools required in the course.	1	0
Total		8

Comments:

6.1: Illustrator, In-Design, and online file storage support the learning objectives and the instructor's ability to access student work.

6.2: Tools and the creative assessment activities promote engagement.

6.3: It is assumed that students will be using Illustrator and In-Design in a class lab. Information on how students can access or purchase these on their own devices would be helpful.

6.4: Course technologies are current.

6.5: No links are provided in the syllabus. A review of the agreement for each application required in the course will insure that student data required for the use of the software is secure. Linking to the agreements will allow students to easily access the policies.

G. Learner Support (9 points total)

7.1 The course instructions articulate or link to a clear description of the technical support offered and how to obtain it.	3	0
7.2 Course instructions articulate or link to the institution's accessibility policies and services.	3	3
7.3 Course instructions articulate or link to an explanation of how the institution's academic support services and resources can help learners succeed in the course and how learners can obtain them.	2	2
7.4 Course instructions articulate or link to an explanation of how the institution's student support services and resources can help learners succeed in the course and how learners can obtain them.	1	1
<i>Total</i>		6

Comments:

7.1: No technical support information is provided in the syllabus. It is recommended that multiple channels of tech support communication be listed in the syllabus to ensure that no student is put behind due to technical difficulties.

7.2: Specific steps are listed for students needing disability accommodations. Contact information for the Coordinator of Disability Services is provided. A link that takes students to the Disability Services site would be helpful.

7.3: Academic resources for tutoring, advising, or other student services are listed, along with their locations on campus. Website links would also be helpful here.

7.4: Student support services are listed, along with their location. A website link would be helpful.

H. Accessibility and Usability (12 points total)

8.1 Course navigation facilitates ease of use.	3	0
8.2 Information is provided about the accessibility of all technologies required in the course.	3	0
8.3 The course provides alternative means of access to course materials in formats that meet the needs of diverse learners.	2	2
8.4 The course design facilitates readability.	2	2
8.5 Course multimedia facilitate ease of use.	2	2
Total		6

Comments:

8.1: This item is unable to be reviewed, as no Blackboard course has been shared.

8.2: Information regarding the accessibility of technology used is not included. This would include instructions on how to obtain and install any programs used, as well as instructions to access captions for videos, or other accessible content.

8.3: The syllabus indicates that a variety of learning materials will be used, and there is a statement regarding the availability of accommodations if necessary. The instructor should be aware that the Americans with Disabilities Act requires any videos to have captions or an accompanying transcript to meet the needs of students with hearing disabilities. Work closely with your institution's office for disability services to identify resources to assist in making your course ADA compliant.

8.4: All course materials follow readability guidelines. Fonts, text color, and background color of the course falls within ADA compliance recommendations. Be aware that screen reader software will not recognize bold or italicized fonts. Check with your office of disability services before significantly changing the appearance of your course.

8.5: The variety of multimedia used is not described in the syllabus. Videos, specifically, are not mentioned, and the Blackboard course is not available for review. When possible, embedding multimedia to play within the course, rather than including it as a downloadable file or clickable link to a new location ensures ease of access and limits student issues that may arise when leaving the LMS to access outside resources, such as linking students to YouTube videos.

Part II: Employment Data

Stakeholder Involvement and Employment Opportunities

Items Reviewed include:

- Internships, Job Shadowing Opportunities that exist with the outcomes and objectives with this course.
- Employment opportunities for these skills.
- Outcomes/Objectives are current and relate to job market.

- See Subject Matter Expert review for specific feedback.

Part III: Creative Commons

Items Reviewed include:

- All course materials presented in Creative Commons?
- Creative Common license (including graphic) is represented on course materials.

Findings include:

The syllabus and all course materials are shared with a Creative Commons 4.0 Attribution license, including corresponding CC graphic.

Part IV: Subject Matter Expert (SME) Findings & Review

Course: EMCC: DGD221
Course Name: Typography
Reviewed by: Joseph Kern
Date: May 4, 2017

Background

Funded by a \$13 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor, *Maine is IT!* is building new educational and career pathways in information technology at all seven of Maine's community colleges. The programs funded by the grant are designed to support Maine workers eligible for the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program, un/underemployed adults, and workforce needs in Maine's growing IT sector. They have been built to serve individuals with a range of experience, from those interested in gaining basic IT skills to IT professionals looking to advance their careers through new industry certifications.

Overall Remarks and Reviewer Summary

In reviewing DGD221 several processes and data collections tools were noted and identified. This reviewer took in account the Dynamic Skills Audit conducted in 2014-2015. Both qualitative and quantitative data was identified in the report that provides the key elements:

1. Career opportunities do exist within 15 miles of EMCC for graduates from an AAS in Digital Graphic Design.
2. Current job openings list specific duties that relate the Typography course, DGD221.
3. The current Advisory Board indicates that DGD221 contributes to the labor market data.

There are current job openings available within 15 miles of EMCC that would utilize the knowledge gained in DGD221 (as of 5/5/17). A Creative Services Producer position is open at WLBZ, the NBC affiliate in Bangor, ME. The job requires skills in Adobe Illustrator, which is the focus of DGD221, along with a Bachelor's degree or an Associates degree and related experience in field. Within 100 miles, a Design and Brand Specialists position at YMCA of Southern Maine, in Portland, ME, is a near-entry-level job for a graphic designer with a post-secondary degree and 2 years of work experience, including advanced skills in InDesign and Illustrator.

The Dynamic Skills Audit outlined the following process, which this reviewer took into consideration when compiling this the formal SME report:

1. Local industry needs were assessed through the program Advisory Board. Minutes from those Advisory Board meetings were reviewed and suggestions from the partnerships were adopted into this summary.
2. Burning Glass data was reviewed to identify themes and trends in the current job market. The Burning Glass report helped identify skills demanded by employers to curriculum outcomes and learning objectives.

A formal SME was conducted with the above reports and compiled in the next section of this report.

A. Program and Course Overview and Objectives

Items Reviewed include:

- Dynamic Skills Audit Summary Report (Academic Years 2014-2015)
- Burning Glass Labor Market Data reports (Compilation)
- Advisory Board Minutes

Findings include:

The DGD221 course learning outcomes and objectives align with the program mission and goals. This reviewer found that the DGD221 course has listed measurable outcomes which can be stacked with other coursework. The industry sector for DGD221 has been categorized as: *541460 Graphic Design Services*. (See: https://www.census.gov/svsd/www/services/sas/sas_summary/54summary.htm#sectordescription) The reviewer finds that this classification is correct.

Those completing this course would enter the Bureau of Labor Statistics occupation classification of *SOC: 27-0000 Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations*. (See: <https://www.bls.gov/soc/2010/soc270000.htm>)

The NCES CIP (Classification of Instructional Programs) is referenced as: *50: Visual and Performing Arts*. (See: <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/cipdetail.aspx?y=55&cipid=88689>)

This is also an accurate classification.

This course was designed for 2nd-year community college students or equivalent.

Listed course objectives include competencies dealing with the functions of:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of Typography terms and use.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of multiple applications of text in Graphic Design.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of organizing information clearly on a page.
4. Demonstrate critical visual thinking.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of professional practice for graphic arts.
6. Demonstrate organizational skills in file management and back up.

The content of these course objectives aligns with the topics listed in the course syllabus and course materials. This alignment also correlates to items found within the Dynamic Skills Audit and Burning Glass baseline skills as listed in the labor market data.

Specific review standards are listed in the table referenced below:

Table: Standard Reviewed Standards for Course Outcomes

Standard Reviewed	N/A	Satisfactory	Not Satisfactory
A.1 The learning outcomes are clearly stated and mapped to specific objectives and/or assignments.			X
A.2 Prerequisites and/or any required competencies are clearly stated.			X
A.3 Learning objectives for each course describe outcomes that are measurable.		X	
A.4 Learning objectives are appropriately designed for the level of each of the course.		X	
A.5 Instruction, activities, and assignments in courses are scaffolded from course to course, and throughout the program.		X	

A.1 - DGD221 articulates specific learning outcomes for the course. For many of these, the link between the outcome and activity is self-explanatory, but most are not explicitly tied to specific assignments or course activities.

A.2 – No prerequisites courses are listed, and previous skills and knowledge specifically relating to graphic design are not listed.

A.3 - Course objectives are measurable.

A.4 - Learning objectives are appropriate for a 2nd-year course.

A.5 – Activities appear to be scaffolded through the course, building in complexity throughout the course, ending in a comprehensive student project. The course’s objectives fill an industry need within the program.

B. Relevancy

Items Reviewed include:

- Dynamic Skills Audit Summary Report (Academic Years 2014-2015)
- Burning Glass Labor Market Data reports (Compilation)
- Advisory Board Minutes

Findings include:

Course competencies are relevant to students, industry, and employers. Strong evidence was found in the Dynamic Skills Audit Summary Report. Direct ties were found through interviews with stakeholders and in Advisory Board minutes.

The table that follows is a clear matrix of how the course outcomes are relevant to students, industry, and employers:

Table: Matrix of evidence-based skills mapped to students, industry, and employers

Standard Reviewed	N/A	Satisfactory	Not Satisfactory
B.1 Course competencies represent industry's expectation of the overarching knowledge, skills, and abilities that 2 nd year college students should possess.		X	
B.2 Core course competencies are relevant to industry and employers .		X	
B.3 Instruction, activities, and assignment in individual courses are relevant and engaging to students .		X	

B.1 - Course objectives align with industry expectations at the appropriate skill level, as they are based on a current industry certification program.

B.2 - Core competencies are relevant to industry and employers, as verified using the Burning Glass labor market data (<http://burning-glass.com/research/coding-skills/>) and the Dynamic Skills Audit Summary. Student learning objectives align with the competencies expected of new hires in the IT security field and those listed by the Advisory Board.

B.3 – The activities provided engage students in simulations of realistic scenarios.

C. Resources & Materials

Items Reviewed include:

- Dynamic Skills Audit Summary Report (Academic Years 2014-2015)
- Burning Glass Labor Market Data reports (Compilation)
- Advisory Board Minutes

Findings include:

Table: Instructional materials and their direct link to course outcomes

Standard Reviewed	N/A	Satisfactory	Not Satisfactory
C.1 The instructional materials contribute to the achievement of the stated course learning objectives.		X	
C.2 The purpose of the instructional materials is clearly explained.		X	
C.3 The instructional materials present a variety of perspectives and approaches on the course content.		X	
C.4 The instructional materials are appropriately designed for the level of the course.		X	

C.1 – The course’s textbook, website, and the assigned activities are used as guides throughout the course..

C.2 The purpose of the required textbook and website are clear.

C.3 – Students work through a variety of typographic design and analysis challenges that emphasize creativity and require students to critically evaluate each other’s work, inviting the sharing of multiple viewpoints.

C.4 – Materials are based on the textbook and website, which are up-to-date for the topic.

D. Assessment & Measurement

Items Reviewed include:

- Dynamic Skills Audit Summary Report (Academic Years 2014-2015)
- Burning Glass Labor Market Data reports (Compilation)
- Advisory Board Minutes

Findings include:

Table: Measurement of effective learning

Standard Reviewed	N/A	Satisfactory	Not Satisfactory
D.1 The course evaluation/criteria/course grading policy is stated clearly on each syllabus.		X	
D.2 Course-level assessments (those that can be delivered) measure the stated learning objectives and are consistent with course activities and resources.		X	
D.3 Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of students' work and participation and are tied to the course grading policy.		X	
D.4 The assessment instruments (that can be delivered) are sequenced, varied, and appropriate to the content being assessed.		X	

D.1 – The grading policy is clearly stated.

D.2 – Assessments align with objectives, activities, and available resources.

D.3 – Specific details are provided to explain how assessments are graded. Participation and discussion guidelines are provided, and these activities are part of the calculated grade.

D.4 – The progression of assignments creates an appropriate sequence that builds skills throughout the course. Variety comes from the different topics, as well as the opportunity for students to create individualized projects.