**Principles of Quality for Online Courses\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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**Overview**

This document articulates the core principles governing the design and delivery of online courses at The University of Montana. The specific implementations of these principles will certainly vary as technology changes and teaching and learning methodologies evolve, but the principles themselves should persist.

Ultimately, a single principle governing all of this is that all course elements (objectives, learning activities, interactions, instructional materials, technologies, and assessments) work together to ensure that students achieve the desired learning outcomes and that an online course is equivalent in quality and academic rigor as a well-executed face-to-face course.

**Core Principles**

1. **Course Overview and Introduction:** The overall design of the course, navigational information, as well as course, instructor, and student information are made clear to the student at the beginning of the course.

2. **Learning Outcomes:** Learning outcomes are clearly defined and help the student focus on learning activities.

3. **Assessment:** Assessment strategies measure and promote learning, are aligned to the learning outcomes, and are designed as essential to the learning process.

4. **Resources and Materials:** Instructional materials are sufficiently comprehensive to achieve course objectives and learning outcomes.

5. **Learner Interaction:** The effective incorporation of instructor-student interaction, meaningful student cooperation, and student-content interaction is essential to student motivation, intellectual commitment, and personal development.

6. **Course Technology:** Technology used in the course should enrich instruction and foster learning.

7. **Learner Support:** The learner is effectively supported through fully accessible modes of delivery, resources, and student support services.

8. **Accessibility:** The course materials, interactions, and policies are intended to accommodate all students.