**Online Learning Heuristics**

Guidelines for Presence

1. Course site contains a page, typically named "Start Here," that provides a course description, course outcomes, faculty contact information, syllabus, and instructions for navigating the course.
2. Welcome announcement is present on the course "home page" and contains clear directions on how to get started.
3. Course site contains a personal introduction from the instructor.
4. Course site includes a faculty photo or other graphical representation.
5. Instructor is accessible through multiple means of communication and virtual “office hours”
6. Instructor plans for and communicates a reasonable response time and turnaround time for feedback.

### Heuristic Guidelines for Community

### Course contains an icebreaker activity that encourages community building

1. Every course unit contains at least one activity that requires interaction among students.
2. Community building activities (excluding synchronous meetings) are required and factor into the students grade as participation. Participation expectations are clearly communicated.

### Heuristic Guidelines for Supporting Students

### Students are provided with the opportunity to provide early and ongoing feedback on the course.

### Course activities contain clear instructions and due dates.

### Course content and activities meet universal design and accessibility standards.

Heuristic Guidelines for SLOs

1. Learning outcomes are measurable
2. Learning outcomes represent student learning and are separate from activities and assessments
3. Multiple learning outcomes, activities, and assessments promote higher-order thinking
4. Learning outcomes are clearly stated at the course level and unit level (e.g. modules, weeks)

Heuristic Guidelines for Course Organization

1. Course content is chunked into manageable units.
2. Unit content is chunked into well-organized and appropriately sequenced components
3. Organization and navigation are consistent in the overall course and units

Heuristic Guidelines for Assessment

1. Activities and assessments are adequate and reasonable for the course duration
2. Assessments are designed to prevent academic dishonesty
3. Learning activities, content delivery methods, planned assessments align with course and unit outcomes
4. Every student learning outcome for the course and each unit is assessed
5. Clear assessment expectations and guidelines are provided for all learning activities
6. Assessment opportunities, including self-assessment, are provided frequently

Heuristic Guidelines: Content and Learning Activities

1. Activities and assessments are adequate and reasonable for the course duration
2. Learning activities, content delivery methods, planned assessments align with course and unit outcomes
3. Every unit contains at least one activity that promotes active learning
4. Clear assessment expectations and guidelines are provided for all learning activities
5. Course content is compliant with copyright, fair use, and creative commons guidelines
6. A variety of modes and media types is used for presenting content
7. Audio and video files are engaging (i.e., meet length recommendations, provide opportunities for interaction, are visually appealing)

Heuristic Guidelines for Universal Usability

1. Course is intuitive and easy to navigate.
2. Text meets universal design standards regarding underlining, case, face, and color of text.
3. Video files are compressed if possible and, when embedded, exist on their own pages so as not to slow page load.
4. Visual elements are not distracting and serve a purpose.
5. Images are optimized for web delivery.

Heuristic Guidelines for Content Organization

1. Course utilizes Xavier template for fully online or blended courses.
2. Course site contains a page, typically named "Start Here," that provides a course description, course outcomes, faculty contact information, syllabus, and instructions for navigating the course.
3. Learning outcomes are appropriately located in the course site.
4. Course site contains links to access technology help and library resources.
5. Links to required resources, software, applications and instructions are provided where they are needed within each unit.
6. Text is brief, chunked, and interspersed with meaningful graphics and headings.