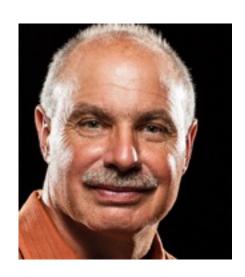# Quality Matters Certification - Where to Begin

Dr. Rick Jerz

Objectives

- Describe what is Quality Matters
- Describe the QM Standards
- Explain the two most important standards
- Examine other "alignment" standards
- Describe some other "essential" standards

- Higher Education
- Rick's Business Analytics course, which was QM certified in 2019

- Supplemental resources "web page"

What is Quality Matters?
www.qualitymatters.org

- Began around 2005
- Non-profit organization
- Goal: to measure and guarantee the quality of online courses
- Rubric of course design standards and a peer-review process
- 7th Edition Rubrics - June 2023
  - Two additional standards
  - Hybrid and synchronous courses added

8 Categories, 44 Standards

1. Course Overview and Introduction
2. Learning Objectives
3. Assessment and Measurement
4. Instructional Materials
5. Learning Activities and Learner Interaction
6. Course Technology
7. Learner Support
8. Accessibility and Usability

- Standards worth between 1, 2, or 3 points

QM Process

- Pay your fee
- Three reviewers, one who is the team leader, one who is a subject matter expert
- Rigorous review process
- A standard is met when at least two reviewers decide it is met
- Many helpful suggestions for improvement
- 3-point standards must be met
- Course is certified if it achieves 86 of 101 points
- QM Goal: To have your course certified
- If under 86 points, you are given about 3 months to improve unmet standards

Standards Overview

- Standards overview – Rubric Workbook

- Rick's visualization in Excel, 44 standards
  - Colors designate 1, 2, and 3-point standards
  - Eight categories shown
  - Text is an abbreviated standard description

- Example: Specific review standard 1.2
  - "Introduction to Structure of Course"
  - "Learners are introduced to the purpose and structure of the course."
  - 3-point essential standard

Where to Begin?

- Standard 1.1? Standard 8.9? Easiest standards? Difficult standards?
- Write a report? No.
- Provide a "shell" course (in LMS)? Yes
- Use the Rubric Workbook as a guide

- Most critical
  - Standard 2.1 – Course objectives
  - Standard 2.2 – Module objectives

2.2 – Module-level Objectives

- "The module/unit-level learning objectives describe outcomes that are measurable and consistent with the course-level objectives."
- A module topic, chapter, unit, or week of instruction
  - Most commonly a textbook chapter
- It is extremely helpful to have a good quality textbook with great support materials
- Objectives must be written in "Blooms" verbs
- Examples: Statistics, Operations Management, Criminal Justice, SolidWorks (CAD)

- Objectives must be clearly displayed (e.g., Moodle)

Select a High-Quality Textbook

- One not in its first edition (BA – 18th edition)
- Many reviewers over many years (alignment)
- Well written, minimum errors
- Chapter objectives (using Bloom's verbs)
- Good illustrations
- Course support
  - Quiz question banks
  - PowerPoints
  - Video support
  - Online resources
  - Case studies, group projects, assignments, etc.
  - Exams
- Instructor support

2.1 – Course-level Objectives

- A synthesis of module objectives
- Must be written with "Bloom's" verbs

- Course objectives commonly in Syllabus

Build a Course Map

- The required course map is helpful in demonstrating the alignment of course-level learning objectives (SRS 2.1) with module/unit-level learning objectives (SRS 2.2) as well as assessments (SRS 3.1), instructional materials (SRS 4.1), learning activities (SRS 5.1), and tools (SRS 6.1)

- Contains the six alignment standards

- Example: Rick's "Business Analytics" course

3.1 – Assessments Measure Objectives

- Do they measure the achievement of the objectives?
- Focus on modules (textbook chapters)
- What does the textbook provide?
  - Questions
  - Essays and compositions
  - Projects
  - Problems
  - Exams
  - Team projects

- Examples:
  - Business Analytics textbook

4.1 – Instructional Materials

- Do they contribute to the objectives?

- Examples:
  - Textbook
  - Lecture videos
  - PowerPoints and course outlines
  - Case studies
  - Software (spreadsheets, simulation)
  - Other external readings
  - Other videos (YouTube, publisher)
  - Graphics and illustrations
  - Journal articles

- Goal: Seek high-quality support materials

5.1 – Learning Activities

- "Active" learning
  - Practice for assessments

- Examples:
  - Reading the textbook
  - Interacting with students and instructor
  - Repetitive quizzing
  - Deliver a presentation or speech
  - Solve a complete problem
  - Discussion forums
  - Gaming methods

- Activity versus assessment, 7th Edition

6.1 – Tools Support Learning Objectives

- LMS
- Online quizzing
- Discussion boards
- Assignment uploading
- Video repositories
- Social media
- Games
- Wikis and blogs
- Whiteboards
- Grade book

- Don't use tools just to use tools, they must align with and support the objectives

Continue with Standards

- When you have these first six alignments standards under control, many others will follow
- Example: 3.2 Grading Policy
  - Clearly shown and precisely described in the syllabus

Additional Suggestions

- Ensure the course contains appropriate depth for the credit hours and course level
- Produce quality videos
- Spellcheck everything
- Pay attention to detail

A Few Notes about Rick's Business Analytics Course Certification

- I desired certification, not my university

- I invested a lot of time creating quality online course materials (videos and LMS)

- I didn't pass the review
  - After modifications and explanations, I passed (all 100 pts)

- I invested around 80 hours in the process

Summary

- Begin with the six "alignment" standards
- A good textbook helps

- You get many good suggestions to improve your course
- More cost-effective than most internal reviews

- Benefits students, instructor, and university

URL to Supplementary Web Page