

Mississippi   
online course   
application

**DISTRICT GUIDANCE**

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**Director, Office of Human Resources**

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Mississippi online course application

**DISTRICT GUIDANCE**

# **OVERVIEW**

The Mississippi Department of Education allows for local education agencies to offer courses through distance and online learning as outlined in board policy Part 3, Chapter 56, Rule 56.1 - Distance Learning, Blended Learning, and Online Courses (Rule 56.1). In accordance with Rule 56.1, courses offered through the Mississippi Interactive Video Network (MIVN), or blended learning courses for which the local education agency provides the certified teacher, do not require additional approval.

For an online course to be approved for use under paragraph 2 of Rule 56.1, local school districts must submit an application to the Mississippi Department of Education for approval to ensure the vendor/provider’s content, curriculum, and assessments are aligned to Mississippi’s course standards.

Districts will submit a **Mississippi Online Course Application (MOCA)** that includes a review of proposed distance and online courses. The evaluation rubric is derived from the Southern Regional Education Board’s (SREB) *Checklist for Evaluating Online Courses* and the International Association for K-12 Online Learning’s (iNOCAL) *National Standards for Quality Online Courses*.

# **APPLICATION PROCESS**

School districts must complete an initial review of courses being proposed for use as distance and online courses. A district may work with other districts to submit a MOCA when multiple districts plan to offer courses provided by the same vendor.

A district online course review team must be comprised of a minimum of three (3) reviewers, to include at least two (2) content specialists (classroom teachers, curriculum specialists) and one (1) technology specialist to complete the review.

The MOCA shall include three (3) components: (1) the Application Cover and Signed Assurances, (2) the Online Course Review Rubric, and (3) the Online Course Alignment Crosswalk.

Completed MOCAs will be submitted electronically for final review and approval by the Mississippi Department of Education. The completed application, including the three required files, must be submitted via a single email to [onlinecourses@mdek12.org](mailto:onlinecourses@mdek12.org).

The Mississippi Department of Education will review applications and notify districts of approval status, as outlined in the approval timeline below.

Once a course has been reviewed and approved by the MDE, the course will be added to a master list of approved online courses for use by other districts for a period of 5 years, or until the curriculum framework is revised, if sooner than 5 years.

# **APPLICATION COMPONENTS**

1. **APPLICATION COVER AND SIGNED ASSURANCES**

The Application Cover and Signed Assurances must be signed by the district superintendent, a district representative, and the district school board chairperson.

1. **ONLINE COURSE REVIEW RUBRIC** The district online review team will collectively complete and submit one (1) rubric for every course being proposed for use as a distance or online course. The review rubric is comprised of five sections described below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section A** | The course provides online learners with multiple ways of engaging with learning experiences that promote their mastery of content and are aligned with Mississippi content standards. |
| Content |
| **Section B** | The course uses learning activities that engage students in active learning; provides students with multiple learning paths to master; the content is based on student needs; and provides ample opportunities for interaction and communication — student to student, student to instructor and instructor to student. |
| Instructional Design |
| **Section C** | The course uses multiple strategies and activities to assess student readiness for and progress in course content and provides students with feedback on their progress. |
| Student Assessment |
| **Section D** | The course takes full advantage of a variety of technology tools, has a user-friendly interface and meets accessibility standards for interoperability and access for learners with special needs. |
| Technology |
| **Section E** | The course is evaluated regularly for effectiveness, using a variety of assessment strategies, and the findings are used as a basis for improvement. The course is kept up to date, both in content and in the application of new research on course design and technologies. Online instructors and their students are prepared to teach and learn in an online environment and are provided support during the course |
| Course Evaluation and Support |

1. **COURSE ALIGNMENT CROSSWALK** The crosswalk will be completed by one (1) of the content specialists on the district online review team using the template provided by the Mississippi Department of Education [see page 33 for the MOCA alignment crosswalk]. One (1) crosswalk must be submitted for each course being proposed for use as a distance or online course. The district must provide a URL for each course being submitted for review, as well as a username and password, if applicable, in order for the Mississippi Department of Education review team(s) to access the online course to review content contained in the course crosswalk and confirm alignment.

# **APPROVAL TIMELINE**

Districts shall submit applications in accordance with timelines established by the MDE.

**Approval Timeline**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **OCTOBER 15** | MDE final review of  district applications for courses to be used in the second semester of the current school year | **January 15** |
| Deadline for submission  of applications for courses to be used in the next school year (i.e., October 15, 2018 deadline for use in 2019-2020 school year) | MDE notification of approval status provided to districts |

# **RESPONSIBILITIES**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MDE** | * Provide guidance on approval process * Review district applications within established timeline * Establish course codes for approved online courses |
|  |
| **DISTRICT** | * Maintain documentation of agreement between district and vendor * Submit Mississippi Online Course Application * Determine course funding structure * Establish rules, regulations, and processes for online courses * Adopt board policy that includes, at a minimum, the requirements of Rule 56.1 (3)(a) i-x * Develop a student handbook that includes, at a minimum, the requirements of Rule 56.1 (3)(b) i-vi |
|  |
| **SCHOOL** | * Abide by all district policies concerning online learning * Ensure rules, regulations, and processes are available to faculty, students, and parents/guardians * Establish an application process requiring parental consent and principal’s prior approval for course enrollment |
|  |
| **VENDOR** | * Provide proof of teacher licensure to district * Provide proof of teacher background check to district * Deliver course content and assessments aligned to competencies, objectives, and standards of respective Mississippi courses |
|  |

# **RULE 56.1**

**Part 3 Chapter 56:  Distance Learning, Blended Learning, and Online Courses**

*Rule 56.1 Distance Learning, Blended Learning, and Online Courses.* The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) regarding the use of distance learning, blended learning, and online courses through the **Mississippi Virtual Public School (MVPS)**, the **Mississippi Interactive Video Network (MIVN)**, courses approved through the **Mississippi Online Course Application (MOCA)** process, and other distance learning/online course providers not already approved by the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE). The MDE does not accredit online programs or schools, but rather approves individual online courses for use in Mississippi schools.

For the purposes of this policy, **distance learning** is defined as a technological delivery model in which regularly scheduled real-time instruction occurs during the school day where students and instructors are not in the same place and in which a Mississippi-certified teacher is responsible for providing instruction. **Blended learning** is defined as a hybrid instructional delivery model where pupils are provided face-to-face instruction in part at a supervised school facility away from home and in part in a computer-based, internet-connected learning environment with some degree of pupil control over time, location, and pace of instruction and in which a Mississippi-certified teacher is responsible for providing instruction. An **online course** is defined as a course delivered through an interactive computer-based and internet-connected learning environment in which students are separated from their teachers by time or location or both and in which a Mississippi-certified teacher is responsible for providing instruction. These courses must be approved through the MOCA process.

1. The **Mississippi Interactive Video Network (MIVN)** is a distance learning system that has been approved by the MDE. This system links certified teachers in one school with classes of students in other schools or districts as a means of delivering real-time instruction. These courses are listed in the *Approved Courses for the Secondary Schools of Mississippi*.

2. For **blended learning** courses in which an LEA provides a face-to-face Mississippi certified teacher, no prior approval from the MDE is required. For online programs or computer-assisted instruction in which an LEA is using for the sole purpose of credit recovery, no prior approval from the MDE is required. For **online dual enrollment** courses through a Mississippi Community College or Institution of Higher Learning, no prior approval from the MDE is required.

3. For **all online courses other than the delivery methods listed in Sections 1 and 2 above**, courses must go through the MOCA process for approval. LEAs must submit an application to the MDE for approval to ensure that the vendor/provider’s content, curriculum, and assessments are aligned to Mississippi’s course standards. LEAs are responsible for determining course funding structure, except for courses funded through MVPS appropriation. MVPS courses must be free to students in accordance with *Miss. Code Ann. § 37-161-3*. To count as a credit toward graduation, course codes must be listed in the *Approved Courses for the Secondary Schools of Mississippi.* Additionally, online courses can only be listed upon MOCA approval. There is no limit to the number of courses a student may take. Enrollment in such courses must have prior approval by the principal.

4. Any LEA that provides a **distance learning/online program other than the delivery methods listed in Sections 1 and 2 above** shall develop and implement a distance and online course policy and handbook guidance that has been adopted by the local school board and that includes the rules, regulations, and processes for online courses. The rules, regulations, and processes shall be available to faculty, students, and parents/guardians.

a. At a minimum, LEAs must ensure the following through local board policy:

i. Teachers are licensed by the Mississippi Department of Education to teach the respective course;

ii. Background checks are conducted for the teachers;

iii. The content, curriculum, and assessments for each course are aligned to the competencies, objectives, and standards of the respective Mississippi course;

iv. Appropriate course codes are used;

v. A facilitator is assigned to assist students;

vi. Students have access to the technology needed for courses;

vii. Students have all instructional materials needed for courses;

viii. The district grading policy is followed;

ix. Students enrolled in the courses take the required state assessments where applicable; and

x. Documentation is maintained on file at the central office.

b. At a minimum, the LEA student handbook shall include the following:

i. The process for notifying parents about the program;

ii. Minimum criteria to determine eligibility for participation;

iii. The number of distance learning/online courses that students can take at one time;

iv. If the distance learning/online course program can be used for credit recovery and/or remediation;

v. The courses by grade level and content area for the distance learning/online program; and

vi. The process for monitoring student progress and notifying parents of student progress during the course.

Source: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-1-3 and § 37-161-3 (Adopted 10/2006, Revised 6/2018)

Mississippi online course application

**PART A: APPLICATION COVER AND  
 SIGNED ASSURANCES**

**NOTE:** This document is one of three (3) parts of the Mississippi Online Course Application. Please complete all portions of the document and save as a PDF. All three (3) parts of the application must be submitted in a single email to [onlinecourses@mdek12.org](mailto:onlinecourses@mdek12.org).

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **District Information** | | | | |
| School District |  | District Phone |  |
| Superintendent |  | | |
| Mailing Address |  | | |
| Contact Person |  | Contact Position |  |
| Contact E-mail |  | Contact Phone |  |

The following parts of the Mississippi Online Course Application have been completed by authorized district personnel in accordance with the Mississippi Online Course Application District Guidance provided by the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE):

* + - **Part A: Application Cover and Signed Assurances**
    - **Part B: Online Course Review Rubric(s)**

*One rubric must be submitted for each course seeking approval.*

* + - **Part C: Online Course Alignment Crosswalk(s)**

*One crosswalk must be submitted for each course seeking approval.*

I certify that the information contained in and attached to this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. If changes occur in the operation or ownership of the program, I further certify that I will notify the MDE prior to, or immediately following, such changes. I understand that providing false, misleading, or incomplete information or failing to notify the MDE of changes as they occur may result in the revocation of approved status and removal from the list of approved providers.

I further certify that the district adopted a board policy that includes, at a minimum, the requirements of Rule 56.1 (3)(a) i-x, and a handbook that includes, at a minimum, requirements of Rule 56.1 (3)(b)   
i-vi, and that these documents are available to district constituents as required by Rule 56.1.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Required Signatures** | | |
|  |  |  |
| Superintendent Signature | Date | Typed Name |
|  |  |  |
| Contact Person Signature | Date | Typed Name |
|  |  |  |
| Local Board Chair Signature | Date | Typed Name |

Mississippi online course application

# **PART B: ONLINE COURSE REVIEW RUBRIC**

As a part of the Mississippi Online Course Application (MOCA), school districts must complete an initial review of courses being proposed for use as distance and online courses. The Online Course Review Rubric is designed to assist districts in determining the quality and effectiveness of the proposed courses. This rubric should be completed by a district online course review team, which should be comprised of a minimum of three (3) reviewers, to include at least two (2) content specialists (classroom teachers, curriculum specialists) and one (1) technology specialist. This evaluation rubric is derived from the Southern Regional Education Board’s (SREB) *Checklist for Evaluating Online Courses* and International Association for K-12 Online Learning’s (iNOCAL) *National Standards for Quality Online Courses v2*.

**NOTE:** This document is one of three (3) parts of the Mississippi Online Course Application. Please complete all portions of the document and save as a PDF. All three (3) parts of the application must be submitted in a single email to [onlinecourses@mdek12.org](mailto:onlinecourses@mdek12.org).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Course Information** | | **Reviewer Information** | | | |
| Course Name |  | Name, Title |  | | |
| Aligned MS Course |  | Name, Title |  | | |
| Provider |  | Name, Title |  | | |
|  |  | District |  | Date |  |

**DIRECTIONS:** Rate each item based on extent to which the item meets the criteria. Please note a justification must be provided for each indicator.

**RATING SCALE:** *Meets Criteria* – no improvement needed

*Improvement Needed* – specific improvement needed to meet the criteria

*Absent* – component is missing

**Section A**

**CONTENT** The course provides online learners with multiple ways of engaging with learning experiences that promote their mastery of content and are aligned with state or national content standards.

| **To what extent does the course meet the criteria in this area?** | **Reviewer Considerations** | **Meets Criteria** | **Improvement Needed** | **Absent** | **Justification** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS | | | | | |
| 1. The course goals and objectives are measurable and clearly state what the participants will know or be able to do at the end of the course. | Objectives are matched to content requirements and to the grade and skill levels of the intended audience.­ |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The course content and assignments are aligned with current Mississippi curriculum framework or nationally accepted content standards set for Advanced Placement courses, or other courses whose content is not included in the state standards.  *NOTE: In order to properly rate this criterion districts must first complete the Online Course Alignment Crosswalk showing course alignment. The Online Course Alignment Crosswalk template can be found in Part C of this guidance document. Districts must submit the Application Cover and Signed Assurances, the Online Course Review Rubric, and the Online Course Alignment Crosswalk for the application to be considered.* | Course objectives, student learning outcomes and assignments are listed and align with established content standards and the content and format requirements of required local school system, state or national assessments. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Course tasks and assessments align with the required local, state and national assessments that are associated with the  course. | Advanced Placement testing requirements; national assessments; state assessments; local school system assessments; technology certification assessments. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The course content and assignments are of sufficient rigor, depth and breadth to teach the standards being addressed. | Clear and explicit alignment exists between objectives, assessments, instructional strategies, content and technology; and the content, activities and assignments provide multiple learning opportunities to master the standards. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Information literacy and communication skills are incorporated and taught as an integral part of the curriculum. | Promotes student-to-student communication as part of lesson activities; utilizes communication forums such as threaded discussion forums, chats, etc.; information literacy is addressed. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Multiple learning resources and materials to increase student success are available to students before the course begins. | Self-assessments or checklists that assess prerequisite knowledge and skills; orientations, tutorials, activities, policies and procedures to help students acquire the prerequisite knowledge and skills. |  |  |  |  |
| COURSE OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION | | | | | |
| 1. A clear, complete course overview and syllabus are included in the course. | The syllabus and overview include: course objectives and student learning outcomes; assignments; student expectations; time requirements; required materials; the grading policy; instructor-student, instructor-parent contact policies; the intended audience; and the content scope and sequence. Other important information includes a rationale indicating how this course is related to other courses, the date of original publication and last revision, the instructor availability and response time, and a description of the final product or other activities that are central to the course content. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Course requirements are consistent with course goals, are representative of the scope of the course and are clearly stated. | The course requirements include: a timeframe for participation; an approximate time required for individual activities; expectations for communications, such as online discussion, synchronous chats and e-mail; activity and other assignment expectations; and survey and/or exam expectations. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Information is provided to students, parents and mentors on how to communicate with the online instructor and course provider, including information on the process for these communications. | This could be included in the course materials or in the orientation to the course materials. |  |  |  |  |
| LEGAL AND ACCEPTABLE USE POLICIES | | | | | |
| 1. Issues associated with the use of copyrighted materials are addressed. | The course provider guarantees in writing that all course materials that they developed comply with copyright laws. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Academic integrity and netiquette (Internet etiquette) expectations regarding lesson activities, discussions, e-mail communications and plagiarism are clearly stated. | The course includes guidelines for students on the use of copyrighted materials, appropriate use of networked resources and academic honesty. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Privacy policies are clearly stated. | This could be included in the course materials or in the orientation to the course materials. |  |  |  |  |
| INSTRUCTOR RESOURCES | | | | | |
| 1. Online instructor resources and notes are included. | Instructor has included: additional guidance for teachers; possible scenarios for course module sequence; suggestions for guiding students on paths; teaching strategies for diverse students; suggestions for fostering student interaction and participation in discussions; additional content materials, such as optional simulated lab materials or activities or extra-credit assignments; ideas for sensitivity to background and student needs; and guidelines for using the learning paths. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Assessment and assignment answers and explanations are included. | Built-in course assessments are provided, and user access to answers and information about each item is available. |  |  |  |  |

**Section B**

**INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN** The course uses learning activities that engage students in active learning; provides students with multiple learning paths to master; the content is based on student needs; and provides ample opportunities for interaction and communication — student to student, student to instructor and instructor to student.

| **To what extent does the course meet the criteria in this area?** | **Reviewer Considerations** | **Meets Criteria** | **Improvement Needed** | **Absent** | **Justification** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| INSTRUCTIONAL AUDIENCE AND ANALYSIS | | | | | |
| 1. Course design reflects a clear understanding of student needs and incorporates varied ways to learn and multiple levels of mastery of the curriculum. | A course for students with low literacy skills may be designed differently than a course for students who are taking Advanced Placement; for example, more scaffolding and chunking of content, or more audio scripts of written materials. |  |  |  |  |
| COURSE, UNIT, AND LESSON DESIGN | | | | | |
| 1. The course is organized into units and lessons. | The course is organized by units and the associated lessons. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The course unit overview describes the objectives, activities and resources that frame the unit. | The unit overview describes the objectives, lessons and resources included in the unit; and includes a description of the activities and assignments that are central to the unit. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Each lesson includes a lesson overview, content and activities, assignments and assessments to provide multiple learning opportunities for students to master the content. | The lesson overview describes the objectives, activities, assignments, assessments, estimated timeframe, and resources included in the lesson. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The course is designed to teach concepts and skills that students will retain over time. | Course includes: backward design (focus on expectations for student learning); essential questions; broad-based concepts; important and worthwhile concepts or skills that are relevant to subject matter and to the “real world” in which the content may be applied; and meaningful and authentic learning experiences that help students apply course concepts and achieve course objectives. |  |  |  |  |
| INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES | | | | | |
| 1. The course instruction includes activities that engage students in active learning. | For students who need or want remediation or enrichment, additional learning activities are present; resources are present when students need more foundational skills or explanations for very difficult concepts. The course also affords the opportunity for students to learn at their own pace, with clear directions and structure as to expectations and time-lines with teacher input and monitoring. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The course and course instructor provide students with multiple learning paths to master the content, based on student needs. | Students are given choices for alternative assignments and assessments to make the best use of their talents and skills, as appropriate. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The instructor engages students in learning activities that address a variety of learning styles and preferences. | Learning activities may include: examples; case studies; simulations; research; a variety of reading and writing activities; visuals and graphics; discussions and labs; podcasts; streaming video; and audio-scripted text. A learning style inventory is included. Strategies that consider the different learning styles of students are used. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The course provides opportunities for students to engage in higher-order thinking, critical reasoning activities and thinking in increasingly complex ways. | Supporting opinions with evidence from test and experience; higher-order thinking inquiries with a variety of questions; interpersonal and self-directional skills; critical and systems thinking (understanding the interconnections among systems); activities that require students to frame, analyze and solve problems, form opinions and develop mental models. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The course reflects multicultural education and is accurate, current and free of bias. | Supporting opinions with evidence from test and experience; higher-order thinking inquiries with a variety of questions; interpersonal and self-directional skills; critical and systems thinking (understanding the interconnections among systems); activities that require students to frame, analyze and solve problems, form opinions and develop mental models. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The instructor can adapt learning activities to accommodate students’ needs. | Students with disabilities; 504 plans; ELL; low skill or literacy levels; enrichment and gifted. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Readability levels, written language assignments and mathematical requirements are appropriate for the course content and the students. | Sensitivity to readability issues, written language skills and mathematical requirements is demonstrated. |  |  |  |  |
| COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION | | | | | |
| 1. The course design provides opportunities for appropriate instructor-student interaction, including timely and frequent feedback about student progress. | Instructors respond to students in a timely fashion. Feedback may include e-mails, discussions and portfolios; feedback using LMS tools (e.g., quizzes and grades; phone calls; webinars; regular progress reports; and end-of-semester/term grades) also may be used. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The course design includes explicit communication/activities (both before and during the first week of the course) that confirms whether students are engaged and are progressing through the course. The instructor will follow program guidelines to address non-responsive students. | Instructor-student interactions begin early enough in the course to confirm active participation by all students. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The course provides opportunities for appropriate instructor-student and student-student interaction to foster mastery and application of the material and a plan for monitoring that interaction. | Collaborative learning opportunities are available through e-mail, discussion strands, oral assessments, synchronous chats, webinars, simulations, lab activities and other group projects. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The course provides opportunities for appropriate student interaction with the content to foster mastery and application of the material. | Course structure should be designed to facilitate, to the greatest extent possible, student interaction with others and with learning resources. |  |  |  |  |
| RESOURCES AND MATERIALS | | | | | |
| 1. Students have access to resources that enrich the course content. | Materials and/or Web links have been reviewed for appropriateness and are aligned with course objectives and specifications. |  |  |  |  |

**Section C**

**STUDENT ASSESSMENT** The course uses multiple strategies and activities to assess student readiness for and progress in course content and provides students with feedback on their progress.

| **To what extent does the course meet the criteria in this area?** | **Reviewer Considerations** | **Meets Criteria** | **Improvement Needed** | **Absent** | **Justification** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| EVALUATION STRATEGIES | | | | | |
| 1. Student evaluation strategies are consistent with course goals and objectives, are representative of the scope of the course and are clearly stated. | Student evaluation: provides ongoing and frequent diagnostics to verify student’s readiness for next modules; allows student to be continuously aware of his/her progress in class and mastery of content beyond grades; provides clear expectations and criteria for assignments, including rubrics for projects and written assignments; specifies the relationship between individual assignments and final course grade; provides detailed, step-by-step instructions for each evaluative exercise; provides guidelines for submitting assignment; provides a variety of feasible and content relevant assignments or evaluative exercises; considers accommodations for ELL and Special Education requirements. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The course structure includes adequate and appropriate methods and procedures to assess students’ mastery of content. | Valid and reliable assessments are frequent and timely and include online or proctored testing, performance assessments, projects, demonstrations, oral assessments, case studies and portfolios; assessment and measurement strategies include “self-check” or practice types of assignments to provide automated, immediate feedback to students, including content that explains the error or alludes to the content presentation; multi-layered approach to promote academic integrity; student participation in the evaluation of their work; and assignments resubmitted to demonstrate mastery. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Ongoing, varied, and frequent assessments are conducted throughout the course to verify each student’s readiness for the next lesson. | Imbedded assessments and other assessment strategies are in place throughout the course to ensure accurate and up-to-date assessment of student performance. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Assessment strategies and tools make the student continuously aware of his/her progress in class and mastery of the content beyond letter grades. | Use of feedback tools and procedures built into the course; students should be able to continuously self-monitor their academic progress. |  |  |  |  |
| ASSESSMENT RESOURCES AND MATERIALS | | | | | |
| 1. Assessment materials provide the instructor with the flexibility to assess students in a variety of ways. | Multiple versions of the same test; test bank available for the instructor’s use; alternative evaluation methods available; test/question item banks organized by the learning outcomes they are intended to assess. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Grading rubrics and models of partially to fully completed assignments are provided to the instructor. | Grading rubrics specify the criteria for the assignments, and models of partially completed assignments demonstrate the characteristics of quality expected. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The grading policy and practices are easy to understand. | The grade values given to assessment and assignments are balanced to reflect their importance in assessing mastery and the importance of the content being assessed. |  |  |  |  |

**Section D**

**TECHNOLOGY** The course takes full advantage of a variety of technology tools, has a user-friendly interface and meets accessibility standards for interoperability and access for learners with special needs.

| **To what extent does the course meet the criteria in this area?** | **Reviewer Considerations** | **Meets Criteria** | **Improvement Needed** | **Absent** | **Justification** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| COURSE ARCHITECTURE | | | | | |
| 1. The course architecture permits the online instructor to add content, activities and assessments to extend learning opportunities. | Additions can be made within the course itself. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The course accommodates multiple school calendars; e.g., block, 4X4 and traditional schedules. | The course design allows users to adapt to various school calendars and schedules. |  |  |  |  |
| USER INTERFACE | | | | | |
| 1. The course is easy to navigate. | Consistent and predictable navigation methods: Students can move logically and easily between areas of the course; color, graphics and icons are used to guide the student through the course; and a consistent look and feel exist throughout the course (consistent text, colors, bullets, and heading styles). |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Course makes maximum use of the robust capabilities of the online medium and makes these resources available by alternative means (video, CDs, podcasts). | Rich media are provided in multiple formats for ease of use and accessibility. |  |  |  |  |
| TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND INTEROPERABILITY | | | | | |
| 1. Hardware, Web browser and software requirements are specified. | Operating system, processor speed, plugins and connection speed are specified. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Prerequisite skills in the use of technology are identified. | Course describes what skills and knowledge of Internet and software applications are needed. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The course utilizes the appropriate content specific tools and software. | A variety of software and online tools are used appropriately and as needed within the online course. Tools should be easy to use, necessary for teaching and/or enriching the lesson, cross-platform and free to the student (or built into the course). The tools should be linked from within the course or sent as software with other course materials at the beginning of the course. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Interoperability technical standards allow sharing content among different learning management systems. | Content is SCORM 1.2 conformant at a minimum (includes IMS Content Packaging 1.1.2); IMS QTI conformant assessments. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Interoperability technical standards ensure sharing of questions, assessments and results with others. | Content is SCORM 1.2 conformant at a minimum (includes IMS Content Packaging 1.1.2); IMS QTI conformant assessments. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Copyright and licensing status, including permission to share where applicable, is clearly stated and easily found. | Course developers or publishers clearly state the copyright and licensing status of all content, including permission to share where applicable. Copyright and licensing information should be readily available, understandable and standardized in terms of use. |  |  |  |  |
| ACCESSIBILITY | | | | | |
| 1. The course meets universal design principles, Section 508 standards and W3C guidelines to ensure access for all students. | Content can be accessed by all students, including students who use assistive technology to see, hear and move the information. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Online textbooks used in a course meet nationally endorsed standards (NIMAS). | Electronic resources meet national accessibility standards for publishers to ensure distribution of accessible, alternative versions of textbooks and other instructional materials. |  |  |  |  |
| DATA SECURITY | | | | | |
| 1. Student information remains confidential, as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). | Defined course procedures for reporting grade and student information complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) posted within the course. ([http://www.ed.gov/policy/ gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/policy/%20gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html)) |  |  |  |  |

**Section E**

**COURSE EVALUATION AND MANAGEMENT** The course is evaluated regularly for effectiveness, using a variety of assessment strategies, and the findings are used as a basis for improvement. The course is kept up to date, both in content and in the application of new research on course design and technologies. Online instructors and their students are prepared to teach and learn in an online environment and are provided support during the course.

| **To what extent does the course meet the criteria in this area?** | **Reviewer Considerations** | **Meets Criteria** | **Improvement Needed** | **Absent** | **Justification** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ASSESSING COURSE EFFECTIVENESS | | | | | |
| 1. The results of peer review and student evaluations of courses are available. | Additions can be made within the course itself. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Course provider uses multiple ways of assessing course effectiveness. | Course is evaluated on multiple criteria: student completion rates; student performance on in-course assessments and on county, state, and/or national assessments or satisfaction surveys. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The course is evaluated regularly for effectiveness and the findings used as a basis for improvement. | Course provider provides evidence of ongoing evaluations and associated improvements. |  |  |  |  |
| COURSE UPDATES | | | | | |
| 1. The course is updated periodically to ensure timeliness. | This information may be in a separate publication from the course publisher. It also could be included in the course overview; e.g., course updated June 2015. |  |  |  |  |
| CERTIFICATION | | | | | |
| 1. Course provider provides evidence of regional accreditation or accreditation by a State Board of Education or its designee. | Accreditation of the course provider is a way to ensure that the course provider is of quality. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The instructor meets the Mississippi licensure requirements and has been trained to teach online and to use the course. | See the SREB report *Standards for Quality Online Teaching* for additional considerations. |  |  |  |  |
| INSTRUCTOR AND STUDENT SUPPORT | | | | | |
| 1. Professional development about the online course delivery system is offered by the provider to assure effective use of the courseware and various instructional media available. | Professional development is available for instructors of online courses, which includes using the technology tools specific to the course. Appropriate evidence could include training schedules, materials, tutorials or external links, as well as expectations for training frequency and annual hours of training. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The course provider offers technical support and course management assistance to students, the course instructor, and the school coordinator. | Online technical help and support should be available any time. If 24/7 support is not available, support hours are clearly posted within the course or on the online program’s website and a maximum response time is noted. Assistance may take the form of Frequently Asked Questions, training resources, mentors, or peer support. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Course instructors, whether face-to-face or virtual, have been provided professional development in the behavioral, social, and when necessary, emotional, aspects of the learning environment. | This standard can only be evaluated in the context of specific instructor(s) having been identified to teach the course. Online instructors have been provided professional development to identify and address the ways in which the online environment can enhance and/or hinder the learning experience and have sensitivity to the perception of written online language. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Course instructors, whether face-to-face or virtual, receive instructor professional development, which includes the support and use of a variety of communication modes to stimulate student engagement online. | This standard can only be evaluated in the context of specific instructor(s) having been identified to teach the course. Professional development prepares the instructor to use multiple, varied means of communication with and stimulating engagement of online students. Modes include but should not be limited to email, threaded discussions, live chat/whiteboard  sessions, document sharing, etc. |  |  |  |  |

This evaluation rubric is derived from the Southern Regional Education Board’s (SREB) *Checklist for Evaluating Online Courses* and International Association for K-12 Online Learning’s (iNOCAL) *National Standards for Quality Online Courses v2*.

Mississippi online course application

# **PART C: ONLINE COURSE ALIGNMENT CROSSWALK**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Reviewer Information** | | | |
| Name, Title |  | District |  |
| **Course Information** | | | |
| Course Name |  | Course  URL |  |
| Aligned MS Course Name |  | Course Username |  |
| Provider |  | Course Password |  |

One content specialist from the district online course review team should work collaboratively with the online provider to articulate how each standard in the Mississippi College and Career Standards and/or Mississippi Framework for the respective course is introduced, taught and assessed. The district must provide a URL for each course being submitted for review, as well as a username and password, if applicable, in order for the Mississippi Department of Education review team(s) to access the online course to review content contained in the course crosswalk and confirm alignment.

**NOTE:** This document is one of three (3) parts of the Mississippi Online Course Application. Please complete all portions of the document and save as a PDF. All three (3) parts of the application must be submitted in a single email to [onlinecourses@mdek12.org](mailto:onlinecourses@mdek12.org).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Mississippi State Standard  (From MCCRS and/or State Frameworks)** | **PROVIDER:** List units in which standards are introduced, taught, and assessed. Include specific examples. | **Review by  the District** | **Review by  the MDE** |
| Example: English I  RI.9.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as influence drawn from text. |  | Aligned  Not Aligned | Aligned  Not Aligned |
|  |  | Aligned  Not Aligned | Aligned  Not Aligned |
|  |  | Aligned  Not Aligned | Aligned  Not Aligned |
|  |  | Aligned  Not Aligned | Aligned  Not Aligned |
|  |  | Aligned  Not Aligned | Aligned  Not Aligned |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Aligned  Not Aligned | Aligned  Not Aligned |
|  |  | Aligned  Not Aligned | Aligned  Not Aligned |
|  |  | Aligned  Not Aligned | Aligned  Not Aligned |
|  |  | Aligned  Not Aligned | Aligned  Not Aligned |
|  |  | Aligned  Not Aligned | Aligned  Not Aligned |
|  |  | Aligned  Not Aligned | Aligned  Not Aligned |