What is Quality Matters?

Quality Matters (QM) is an international, non-profit organization centered on improving the design of online and hybrid courses. Begun as a FIPSE grant over a decade ago, QM is now a self-supporting organization that is faculty-focused, and dedicated to the idea of continuous improvement and quality assurance in online learning.

QM is both a rubric and a process. As a rubric, there are 43 specific, annotated standards organized under eight general standards, such as: Learning Objectives, Assessment and Measurement, Instructional Materials, and Course Activities/Learner Interaction. Faculty developers and instructional designers can utilize the rubric to help design high-quality online courses, or to look at existing courses to highlight possible opportunities for improvement and revision.

Quality Matters is also a course review process, and institutions can decide to have courses formally reviewed through QM, or departments and/or individual faculty can do informal reviews according to their needs. QM, as both a rubric and a process, is focused on the design of an online course, and does not look at the delivery/teaching of the course. It is a tool to evaluate course design and components, not the individual instructor. A major tenet underlying Quality Matters is the idea of alignment, where critical course components – such as learning objectives, assessments, and materials – must reinforce one another to support student achievement and learning.

Want to learn more?
Kent State University offers a 1.5 hour, face-to-face workshop entitled: Designing with Quality Matters. This workshop will introduce participants to the QM Rubric, and to basic instructional design methods for online courses.

Kent State also sponsors QM’s full-day, flagship workshop, Applying the Quality Matters Rubric, at least once per semester, and a session can be held by request for any Kent Campus if there are at least ten guaranteed Kent State participants.

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