WBT Design Standards

This document outlines standards for WBT design for asynchronous, self-study courses.

Note: As standards become necessary for courses conducted to groups of students (whether asynchronous or synchronous), separate documents will be created that outline those areas.

Color Key

This document is still in development. The following color key identifies items still to be determined.

Blue items = In development
Red items = Questions

Overview

This document covers the following types of standards:
- Course Structure Standards
- Technical Standards (Fonts, Headings, Page Background, Color Scheme, Table Properties, Graphics, Video, Icons, Navigation, Accessibility, File Naming, Hardware & Software Requirements, Other)
- Instructional Standards
- Miscellaneous Standards

Course Structure Standards

At minimum, a course includes:

- Course syllabus
- Instructions for taking course and obtaining credit
- Video content
- Link to eCademy test and evaluation

Optionally, a course could include:

- Interactivity/exercises
- Simulations
- Animations
- Detailed graphics or diagrams

Technical Standards

Monitor

- Screen resolution at least 600 x 800
- Monitor size **at least a 15-inch**
- **Colors: At least 16 bit (65536**)

Font

- Course applies no more than 3 font types
- Use fonts that can be found on most PCs. Use the families found in Dreamweaver for safest choice.
  - "Safe" serif fonts: Times New Roman, Georgia
  - "Safe" san-serif fonts: Arial, Verdana
- Course applies standard font sizes : 12 point for standard text. 10 point for captions. (In Web terms this translates to "default" font and "-1" size??)
- Course applies standard, Web-compatible font colors that coincide with course color scheme; Use black text if background warrants it.

Headings

- Heading specs:
- Sub-heading specs:

- If there are many layers/levels to course, each page should have a section identifier informing students of the course, section name, and subsection, if necessary.

Color Scheme

- Course uses limited combination of colors
- All background colors have a noticeable contrast in reference to the text
- Other?

<u>Page Background</u>

- Background colors have a noticeable contrast in reference to the text
- No dark backgrounds with light text; this is hard on the eyes

<u>Page Content</u>

- Scrolling should be avoided if possible; place limited amounts of content/text on each page/screen

<u>Graphics</u>

- Graphic elements have at least 3 pixels of vertical and horizontal space if they are next to text.
- All graphics are specified with an ALT name.
- Graphic elements are saved in specified format: JPEG or GIF

<u>Video & Audio</u>

- Video elements exist as 320 x 240 pixels
- Video elements are compressed by using specified applications:
- Audio elements are compressed by using specified applications:

<u>Icons</u>

- The use of primary icons are standardized across a particular set of courses, network, or degree or certification program (depending on network's preference).
- The following are the standard icons needed for each course (may depend on network):
  - Test link to eCademy
  - Exit
  - Syllabus
  - Menu/Site Map
  - Check on Learning/Quiz/Interaction
  - ?? Others

<u>Navigation</u>

- Courses include consistent navigation scheme
- All long pages (requiring students to scroll) include an internal link to the top of the page
- All course materials accessible within maximum of 4 button clicks; that is, the course does not contain more than 4 menu levels (3 preferred).
- Course provides site navigation map or menu

Accessibility

- Course provides alternative text for all images, applets, and image maps.
- Course ensures user control of content changes: Ensure that moving, blinking, scrolling, or auto-updating objects or pages may be paused or stopped.
- Course provides clear navigation mechanisms, orientation information, navigation bars, a site map, etc. -- to increase the likelihood that a person won't get lost in the course.
- Ensure that documents are clear and simple so they may be more easily understood.

File Naming

- File names and extensions meet specified standards:
- Files stored in specified file management structure:

Hardware and Software Requirements

- Hardware and software requirements (minimum and preferred). Hardware requirements include: monitor size, CPU, RAM, modem speed:
- Software requirements include: operating system, internet browser(s), plug-ins, and any other applications required:
    - o Operating System: Windows 9x and above
    - o Software applications: Internet Explorer or Netscape 4.0 or higher
    - o Plug-ins:
        - ▪ Real Player plug-in (version 7)
        - ▪ QuickTime player (version 4)
        - ▪ Macromedia Flash (version 4)
- A page prior to course entry should inform users of all required plug-ins and software. Links should be provided to download locations for these items.
- If users fail to download and install the correct software or plug-ins prior to course entry, safety features should be built into the course that will warn users that they are missing essential components, then allow them to download the components on the spot.

Other

- The size & type of all files that need to be downloaded are published right next to the link.

- A copy of all course content information is saved on another computer or storage device.

Instructional Standards

- Course divided into instructional modules or units related to learning objectives.
- Each instructional module contains list of key instructional events and activities (recommended directions/procedures for completing the module).
- Sequence of instructional events and presentation of course information are grounded in learning and instructional theory, research and practice.
- Learners are presented with instructional approaches based on desired learning outcome(s) and students' prior skills and knowledge.
- Instructional Modules include events that promote active learning on a regular basis.
- Learner assessment, instructional strategy, and course objectives are aligned; that is, the skills, knowledge and/or attitudes specified in the course objectives correlate directly to skills, knowledge and/or attitudes that are taught and assessed.
- Published learning objectives related to published course goals.
- When possible, learning builds on students' prior learning and experience.

Course Assignments and Activity Standards

- Course assignments and activities are aligned to course objectives.
- All course requirements/assignments are stated upfront along with general time requirements.
- Course assignments and/or activities promote self-awareness, reflection, and the development of metacognitive, and/or self-regulatory skills.
- Directions for completing course assignments and activities published.
- Performance criteria published for all activities.
- Performance feedback provided for all activities.

Learner Assessment Standards

- This is handled through the eCademy.

Course Evaluation Standards

- This is handled through the eCademy.

Miscellaneous Standards

Copyright

- Copyright permission obtained, recorded and stored when necessary.