Practice Exercise

Using the *Resource Support* Checklist Items to Evaluate an Existing Site

Use this Resource Support Checklist to evaluate a course of your choice. The checklist here provides a sample of different items from Resource Support categories which follow:

Online Support
Online Resources
Offline Resources

Tip: You may want to use the site Search tool and enter a key word (for example, "hardware" Or "Tech Requirements" to more quickly locate information to answer a survey item.

Online Support

Does the course include a Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) page?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Does the institution conduct a pre-assessment survey to identify if learners have necessary skills for online learning?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Does the course provide any guidance to students on how to organize for online learning?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Does the instructor assist students who encounter problems in completing their assignments?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Do students receive guidance on any of the following skill(s)?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

If *yes*, check all that apply:
- ❑ Ability to work alone
- ❑ Ability to learn without face to face classroom interaction
- ❑ Ability to do collaborative work with never-met individuals
- ❑ Not applicable
- ❑ Other

Does the instructor/staff contact students (who fail to participate in regular online learning activities for the course) to see if they are encountering problems?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

If *yes*, how are students contacted? Check all that apply:
- ❑ E-mail
- ❑ Phone
- ❑ Fax
- ❑ Letter
- ❑ Other

Does the course provide any information or ideas about how many hours (approximately) per week students are expected to spend on course assignments?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

Do students receive any guidance on how to search course relevant resources on the Web using search engines?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

Do students receive any guidance on quality and reliability of online resources they find using search engines?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

Does the course provide someone other than the instructor who can assist with student problems regarding learning tasks? (Note: In addition to instructional team, course can use peer-peer groups for such situations.)
- ❑ Yes

❑ No
❑ Not applicable
If *yes*, please specify

Does the instructor provide timely responses to student queries?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Does the course provide someone other than the instructor who can help students with problems?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Does the institution regularly review the effectiveness of counseling services?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable
❑ Other (specify)
If *yes*, check if any of the following used for collecting data. (check all the apply):
   ❑ Student surveys
   ❑ Email communications
   ❑ Telephone
   ❑ Other (specify)

Does the course provide links to Websites that provide subject-related job postings? (Note: Jones International University provides students with links to Websites where they can either post their resume online or review job postings from companies around the country (http://www.e-globallibrary.com/eprise/main/egloballibrary/demo/index))

❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable
❑ Other (specify)

Check if the course provides technical support for distance learners by any of the following informational and communication options. (check all that apply):

Telephone
Live Chat
Email
Other

Does the course provide troubleshooting (or expert technical support from specialized staff) assistance or a help line? (Note: If the course is hosted on vendor's LMS- learning management system, then it needs to be very clearly described to learners about who provides the technical support for LMS.)
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

Does the course provide round-the-clock (24/7) technical support?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

If the course is offered in multiple languages, are the round-the-clock (24/7) technical support services available in all these languages?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

Does the course provide clear guidelines to the learners on what support can and cannot be expected from a help line? (Note: For example, things the student is responsible for, and things that the student can expect the help line to solve.)
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

Do students receive any guidance on how to set up hardware equipment for desktop video conferencing (if needed for the course)?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

Does the course provide print-based User Guide for learners?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

Do students receive any guidance on how to do the following?
- ❑ Send and respond to e-mail
- ❑ Send e-mail attachments
- ❑ Open files in e-mail
- ❑ Install required software
- ❑ Scan a picture
- ❑ Print within Webpage frames
- ❑ Create online presentation using presentation software
- ❑ Transfer and receive files between learner desktop and server

❑ Organize bookmarks in the browser
❑ Other (specify)

Does the course provide technical support materials on the Web?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Does the technical support send e-mail answers to a question from one student about a general technical issue to all students?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Check if any of the following forms of technical support available for students (check all that apply):
❑ Help-desk technician on duty
❑ Interactive training video (online)
❑ Interactive training video (mailed to learners)
❑ Call-in lines
❑ Assistance from instructor/tutors
❑ Other
❑ Not applicable

If asynchronous help is provided, then how soon can learners expect to get answers to their e-mail, phone message or fax inquiries from the Technical Support Staff?
❑ Within 6 hours
❑ Within 12 hours
❑ Within 24 hours
❑ Within 36 hours
❑ Within 48 hours
❑ Does not respond to e-mail messages
❑ Does not return phone messages
❑ Does not respond to fax messages
❑ Not applicable
❑ Other (specify)

Online Resources

Online Resources	Examples

Multimedia archives	Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching (MERLOT) is a free and open resource designed primarily for faculty and students of higher education. Links to online learning materials are collected along with annotations such as peer reviews and assignments. URL: http://www.merlot.org
Mailing lists and their archives	Anyone can subscribe (generally at no charge) to an e-mail mailing list on a particular subject or subjects and to post messages. The Distance Education Online Symposium Listserv (DEOS-L) is a moderated listserv that facilitates discussion of current issues in distance education. URL: http://www.ed.psu.edu/acsde/deos/deos-l/deosl.asp
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)	Hillsborough Community College in Florida hosts an e-learning FAQs site for students. URL: http://www.hcc.cc.fl.us/dislearn/Summer_2003/studfaqs.htm
Glossaries	PlasmaLink Web Services provides the Glossary of Instructional Strategies as a resource for all educators. URL: http://glossary.plasmalink.com/glossary.html
e-books	University of Virginia's E-Book Library has hundreds of publicly-available ebooks for classic British and American fiction, major authors, children's literature, American history, Shakespeare, African-American documents, the Bible, and much more. URL: http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/ebooks/ebooklist.html
Dictionaries	Resources for the Study of Norwegian site provides online dictionaries in Norwegian and other languages. URL: http://employees.csbsju.edu/tnichol/norwegian.html#dict
Calculator	State University of New York developed an Online Calculator for prospective students to determine how much money they can save by taking a college-course from their home. URL: http://sln.suny.edu/sln/public/original.nsf/a6b56cc3058e682485256c790066b2d5?OpenForm
Webliographies	The Maritime History Webliography at the University of North Carolina attempts to organize and classify those resources currently available on the internet with some connection to maritime history. URL: http://www.ils.unc.edu/maritime/mhiweb/webhome.shtml
Recommended reading lists	Recommended reading list in educational technology, instructional technology, training, distance education, online learning, online education, open learning design, k-12, multimedia and user interface design. Also, contains Top Ten List by experts in the field. URL: http://BooksToRead.com/et.htm
Digital libraries	Institutions with online programs should consider either establishing their own digital libraries, partnership (consortia) digital libraries, or service agreement with other digital libraries to provide digital library support to their online students. These

	digital libraries should be created to insure that all available resources are complete, highly searchable and richly formatted (Schmitz, 2001). The California Digital Library (CDL) is an additional "co-library" of the University of California (UC) campuses, with a focus on digital materials and services. CDL is a collaborative effort of the ten UC campuses. URL: http://www.cdlib.org/
Computer tutorials	Department of Sociology at University of California (Davis) developed a computer tutorial entitled "Add a Network Printer." URL: http://sociology.ucdavis.edu/tutorials/Add_a_Network_Printer_vie wlet_swf.html
Experts online	Experts Online hosted by Local Initiatives Support Corp is an interactive forum for professional discussion among industry experts, as well as national and local practitioners. Experts Online live event (free of charge) as a support and training service to community development practitioners nationwide. URL: http://www.liscnet.org/resources/experts_index.shtml
e-books	University of Virginia's E-Book Library has hundreds of publicly-available ebooks for classic British and American fiction, major authors, children's literature, American history, Shakespeare, African-American documents, the Bible, and much more. URL: http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/ebooks/ebooklist.html
Journals and Magazines	*The Technology Source* (ISSN 1532-0030), a peer-reviewed bimonthly periodical published by the Michigan Virtual University, is to provide thoughtful, illuminating articles that will assist educators as they face the challenge of integrating information technology tools into teaching and into managing educational organizations. URL: http://ts.mivu.org/
Newsletters	The "LD OnLine Newsletter" provides up-to-date information for the field of learning disabilities. UR L: http://www.ldonline.org/subscribe.html
Newspapers	the Internet Public Library has links to online newspapers from around the world. URL: http://www.ipl.org/div/news/
Personal journals (i.e., Web logs or blogs)	Blogs or Weblogs are an informal personal Websites which can be used as powerful e-learning resources. Weblogs are sometimes called Web journals. An increasing number of people are blogging every day. Therefore, there are numerous Weblogs in various topics which are updated regularly. Professor Ray Schroeder at the University of Illinois at Springfield

	scans the news daily for items of relevance in the field of new communication technologies, educational technologies, and online learning. He created three Weblogs (Online Learning Update, Education Technology, and Techno-News) to keep his technologies seminars and classes up-to-date and fresh for his students. Website: http://people.uis.edu/rschr1/bloggerinfo.html
Knowledge management	The Website entitled "Teaching and Implementing Knowledge Management Programs" provides many examples of companies and organizations that are implementing knowledge management. URL: http://www.icasit.org/kmclass/teaching/

Does the course have (or links to) any of the following online resources? (check all that apply):
❑ Multimedia archives
❑ Mailing lists and their archives
❑ Newsgroups
❑ FAQs
❑ Glossaries
❑ e-books
❑ Dictionaries
❑ Calculator
❑ Webliographies
❑ Recommended reading lists
❑ Databases
❑ Digital libraries
❑ Computer tutorials
❑ Experts online
❑ Electronic books
❑ Journals
❑ Magazines
❑ Newsletters
❑ Newspapers
❑ Documents
❑ Personal journals (i.e., web logs or blogs)
❑ Knowledge management

Do all categories of available online resources have brief descriptions about their contents?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Does the course provide an online bookstore (i.e. a means of purchasing course books online)?
❑ Yes

❑ No
❑ Not applicable
❑ Other (specify below)

Does the course provide summaries and reviews of on-line discussions?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Are the external links to resources appropriately related to the context of the content?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Do the external links to resources increase the credibility of the course?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Are the external links checked on a regular basis to make sure they still work?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Does the course provide a student annotation facility for students to make notes for future reference?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Does the course make use of EPSS - Electronic Performance Support System (software designed to improve productivity by providing immediate on the job access to learning and information) as a research tool?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Does the institution's library have library resources online?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable
If *yes*, do students have access to its databases via Internet or other network?
　❑　Yes

- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

Does the institution have an on-line means of borrowing books and other resources?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

If *yes*, describe the following:
- ❑ How long books or other resources can be kept
- ❑ How books or other resources can be returned (e.g., via regular mail or other means)

Does the institution have digital library of its own?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

If *no*, does the institution have partnership with other institutions to use their digital libraries?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable
- ❑ Other (specify)

Do the online resource Websites provide bibliographies or lists of references to indicate the original sources of materials included in their sites?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable
- ❑ Other (specify)

Check if students have access to any of the following: (Check all that apply):
- ❑ Online catalogs
- ❑ Periodical indexes
- ❑ Bibliographic databases
- ❑ Other

Does the institution make special arrangements with local libraries for the distance learners to have access to library resources?
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Not applicable

Do remote students receive special training on how to access library resources electronically (e.g., library orientation)?
- ❑ Yes

❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Do bandwidth limitations affect remote access to library resources?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Does the course provide an on-line course reference manual for site mechanics (how to use the site)?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

If needed for the coursework, does the course provide on-line tools such as a calculator for students to use?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Does the institution have a knowledge management (KM) site?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Does the course use Weblogs as resources for learning?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Offline Resources

Does the course require any of the following off-line resources?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable
If *yes*, check all that apply:
   ❑ Dictionaries
   ❑ Glossary
   ❑ Books
   ❑ e-books
   ❑ Papers
   ❑ Maps
   ❑ .pdf file which can be downloaded for later reading

❑ Other (specify below)

Does the host institution's library have a system of getting books and other materials for distance students via interlibrary loan?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable

Does the institution provide information on how to get region-wide borrowers cards to borrow books from other academic libraries?
❑ Yes
❑ No
❑ Not applicable