

# Blended Learning Module Design Template

## INTRODUCTION

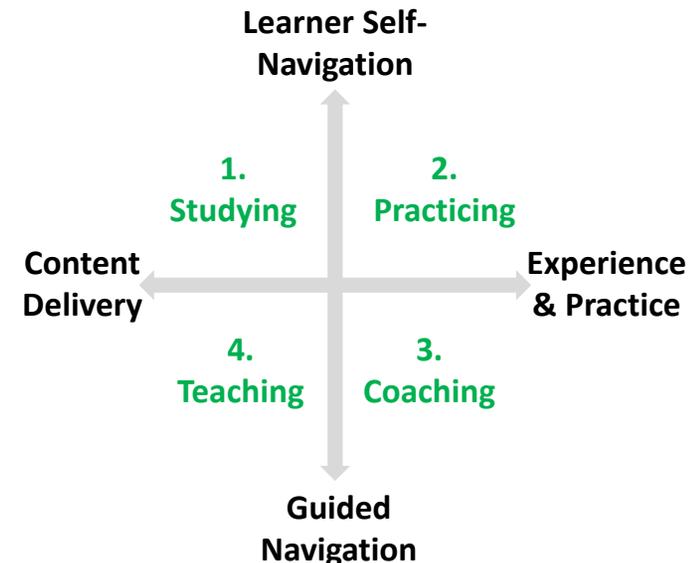
The blended course you will be designing is comprised of several modules (you will determine the final number of modules in the course as part of the design process). This template is intended to guide you in the design and development of a single course module and should be used once you have drafted the overall course outline and structural plan. The template reflects the application of two blended learning design models and enables you to indicate how aspects of each model are informing your design decisions at each stage of the design and development process.

### The Learning Ecology Model

Source: Wenger, M. S. & Ferguson, C. (2006). A Learning Ecology Model for Blended Learning from Sun Microsystems. In C. J. Bonk and C. R. Graham, *The Handbook of Blended Learning: Global Perspectives, Local Designs*. San Francisco: Pfeiffer, Inc., 76-91.

Background:

The model should be viewed as a matrix, with the four quadrants representing complementary modes and methods of instruction and learning for a blended course of instruction. Illustrated at opposite ends of the x-axis are different modes and methods for the delivery of instructional content, from factual information on the left-end to practice-oriented learner experiences on the right-end. Opposite ends of the y-axis reflect whether the instructor (bottom-end) or the learner (top-end) controls the learning process.



Guidelines for Applying the Learning Ecology Model to the Course Design Process:

While it is not necessary to include all four quadrants of the Learning Ecology Matrix in each course module, as you move from module to module your design should eventually incorporate all four quadrants of the Matrix. In the design template you are asked to indicate which quadrant(s) of the Matrix you are including in each module. This will ensure that your final course design reflects all of these essential blended elements.

## The Community of Inquiry Framework

Sources: Garrison, D. R., Anderson, T., & Archer, W. (2000). Critical inquiry in a text-based environment: Computer conferencing in higher education. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 2(2-3), 87-105. See also Swann, Karen, Garrison, D. R., and Richardson, J. C. (2009). A Constructivist Approach to Online Learning: The Community of Inquiry Framework. In Payne, C. R. (ed.), *Information Technology and Constructivism in Higher Education: Progressive Learning Frameworks*. Hershey, PA: IGI Global, 43-57.

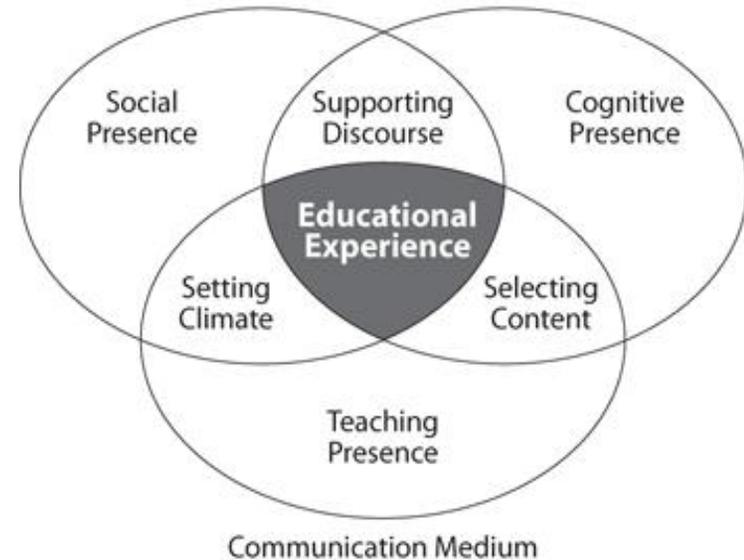
### Background:

The Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework is a process model of online learning [Swann, et al, 2009, p. 4]. The model is grounded in two core processes: inquiry (applying scientific method to practical problem solving) and collaboration. Indeed, the model is predicated upon the development of a collaborative “community of learners” comprised of the course participants.

From an instructional design perspective, the most important features of the model are its three core elements:

- ▶ Social Presence – The degree to which participants in a computer-mediated environment identify with their classmates (the “community”) and communicate in an open manner to build group trust and commitment, and interact within the group around common intellectual activities.
- ▶ Cognitive Presence – The extent to which participants are able to construct and confirm meaning through sustained reflection and discourse. This occurs when participants first encounter a triggering event (for example, an assignment or exercise in the course module) and then proceed through a process of exploration (searching for relevant information), integration (where ideas begin to crystalize), and resolution (narrowing down and testing possible solutions) [Garrison, Anderson, and Archer, 2000]. Note that these four phases of “practical inquiry” are not strictly iterative and that, under the instructor’s guidance, participants often revert back to an earlier stage to re-think their assumptions and conclusions. The process of achieving cognitive presence is thus often one step backwards, two steps forward. [see Swann, et al, 2009, pp. 7-8].

## Community of Inquiry Framework



- ▶ Teaching Presence – The design, facilitation, and direction of cognitive and social processes for the purpose realizing personally meaningful and educationally worthwhile learning outcomes [Garrison, Anderson, and Archer, 2000].

As the graphic depicts, the educational experience of the course participants is achieved at the intersection of these three core elements of the framework.

Guidelines for Applying the Community of Inquiry Model to the Course Design Process:

The objective of using the Col framework to guide instructional design is to provide course participants with a dynamic, collaborative, constructive learning experience. Thus, the design and organization of authentic learning activities that establish presence in each of the three core elements of the framework is essential. In the asynchronous components of each course module, it is vital to make expectations with regard to discourse and collaboration absolutely clear [Swann, et al, 2009, p. 13]. In the design template you are asked to indicate how you will stimulate discourse through your instructional strategy and where you believe direct instructor facilitation will be necessary to achieve this objective.

# Blended Learning Module Design Template

Use this part of the template to design each of the course modules. In addition to applying the two design models described in the Introduction, you will notice that there is an emphasis on module-to-module transition and congruence between module-by-module objectives and the overall performance goals of the course.

Module Number & Name: \_\_\_\_\_

PURPOSE OF THE MODULE	
Specify the module's learning objectives	State the objectives of this module in terms of actions and tasks the participants will be able to carry out in the performance context of the course
Indicate how the module's learning objectives relate to the broader objectives of the course	Place the objectives of this module in context in order to demonstrate continuity and congruence with the entire course
Length of the module & time frame for delivery	Does this module cover a chunk of the course material roughly equivalent to each of the other modules?
MODULE PROCEDURE	
Transition from previous module	How will you provide continuity between this and the previous module? How will you show how this module fits into the broader context of the course?
Topics to be covered in this module	Provide participants with an overview of the topics to be covered in this module

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Module Number & Name: \_\_\_\_\_

	Online Delivery Components		In-Person Delivery Components	How You will Stimulate Discourse to Create Social & Cognitive Presence		Relevant Quadrant(s) from the Learning Ecology Model <sup>4</sup>
	Synchronous	Asynchronous		Without Instructor Facilitation	With Instructor Facilitation	
<b>MODULE PROCEDURE (continued)</b>						
Instructional strategy & activities <sup>1</sup>						
Tools, resources & material to be used <sup>2</sup>						
Participant reflection strategy <sup>3</sup>						
Transition to the next module	How will you provide continuity between this and the next module?					
<b>ASSESSMENT</b>						
What are your assessments strategies for each of the online and in-person delivery components in the module?	Synchronous component assessment strategy	Asynchronous component assessment strategy	In-person component assessment strategy			

<sup>1</sup>How will you present or make available content for each of the topics to be covered in this module? What media will you use? What exercises and applied activities will you include at each phase of the module delivery?

<sup>2</sup>For each phase of the module delivery, indicate the tools, resources, and materials you will make available for participants

<sup>3</sup>Indicate how you will build reflection time for participants into each phase of module delivery

<sup>4</sup>Indicate the quadrants of the Learning Ecology Model that are included in this module. [Note: you do not have to create a design that includes every quadrant of the model in each module. Just make certain that you have created an overall course design that includes each of the four quadrants.