

Course Title

PODIATRY MATTERS

Course Description

This four-week course is intended to address issues that face the podiatrist in day-to-day practice. The course examines some of the key problems of patients who have vascular problems affecting their lower limbs. While the course is mainly focused on clinical matters, questions are also raised about the nature and scope of podiatry.

Course Design

Goals and Objectives

Learning objectives should describe behaviors the students will be able to demonstrate at the end of the class or unit. Course objectives are clear and concise statements that describe **what you intend** your students to learn by the end of the course. The Podiatry Matters course's Block 3 objectives are as listed in short: 1) Watch Video, 2) Complete Session, 3) Post a question, 4) Complete mini test. These action items do not identify a course's learning objectives. Learning outcomes are listed in the handbook, however, course objectives are not available.

Rating: 2

- Goals and objective are not clearly written in measurable learning outcomes
- The level does not match the desired outcomes

Content Presentation

The Course Content section starts with Block 3, as opposed to Block 1. Although, the last content Block 1 states "Welcome to your first learning block" and it shows as last in the course.

Rating: 3

- Content is made available or "chunked" in manageable segments (i.e., presented in distinct learning units or modules)
- Navigation is somewhat intuitive, but some "exploring" is required to determine the flow of content

Learner Engagement

There are no mention of how the instructional strategies will assist the learner in achieving course goals, additionally, there are no course goals identified. There is an "Orientation" and "Start Here" section. Within the Orientation/Start Here, there is a "Navigating the Course" link which takes the learner to a few screenshots of menu items, which do not align with the actual course. It appears as if the screenshots were taken and the course menus were changed after. There are no authentic assessment activities. There is a quiz given at the conclusion of each "Block" and the discussions are not properly facilitated with instructor presence or guidance to steer conversations in a direction to encourage higher order thinking.

Rating: 1

- It is not clear how the instructional strategies will help learners achieve course goals and objectives
- Guidance is provided, but could be improved with greater detail or depth
- Higher order thinking is not required or encouraged

Technology Use

The technology in this course that was utilized was the discussion board (students are to start a new thread, as the instructor did not present discussion topics) and viewing embedded videos and PowerPoints. The course could have included a blog or wiki, as it's a MOOC and they can be constantly updated by newly registered students, a glossary of terms which linked to further external scholarly information of the term, and online collaboration teams could have been developed to make use of the "groups" functionality.

Rating: 2

- Tools available within the LMS are not used to their full extent or not used when it would be appropriate to do so
- Only a few tools (of those available within the LMS) are used in a way that streamlines access to materials and activities for students
- There is little variety in use of technologies within the LMS

Interaction and Collaboration

Communication Strategies

Wikis, blogs, chats, groups, and facilitated discussion boards could have been implemented in this asynchronous environment. Consequently, a Twitter handle is available throughout the course, but no interaction between the learners and Twitter account are established. Additionally, a synchronous Elluminate, Chat, Communities or BB Collaborate Live Session could have been scheduled on a rolling basis.

Rating: 1

- Communication strategies are included, however, they may not consistently reinforce desired learning outcomes
- Asynchronous communications are focused primarily on lower levels of thinking (e.g., summarizing, describing, interpreting, etc.)
- Little to no attention has been devoted to communication strategies
- Interaction activities that are included do not invoke critical thinking, reinforce learning, or take advantage of the specific strengths of the communication tools used.

Development of Learning Community

Rating: 2

- Communication activities may help learners build a sense of community, but do not appear to be designed with this in mind
- Some student-to-student interaction is built into the course
- More focus is needed on designing activities and a course climate that foster student-to-student interactions as well as student-to-instructor interactions.

Interaction Logistics

The only communication made available for learners in this this course is via the discussion boards and the boards do not contain a rubric which outlines expectations. Threads are started by students and some contain conversations regarding technical issues instead of course content materials. The instructor is absent and provides no direction on asynchronous discussions.

Rating: 2

- The instructor sometimes takes advantage of LMS tools to post announcements, reminders, etc.

- Students are not given a clear set of criteria for how communications activities will be graded
- Little information is provided regarding what constitutes a “good” response or posting
- Instructor expectations of student interactions are not made clear
- Few or no guidelines are provided to students regarding the desired quantity or quality of communications/ interactions within the course
- The instructor does not participate in communications activities with students

Assessment

Expectations

The course handbook states the assessment of quizzes under the “Course Requirements” section of the attachment.

Rating: 2

- Students are assessed on the topics described in the course goals and objectives
- There may be some explanation of how assessments will be scored/ graded Instructions lack detail that would help students understand how to complete the activities

Assessment Design

This course has the opportunity for additional assessments. The author could have created an authentic assessment activity which tied to the learning community of experts in podiatry. Additionally, a summative assessment is not included, online courses may include a final assessment as measurement of the learner meeting the course objectives and ultimately resulting in positive learner outcomes. However, formative assessments are presented as “block” quizzes.

Rating: 1

- Assessment activities have “face validity” (i.e., they appear to match the curriculum)
- The vast majority of assessments require only low-level thinking (memorization, for example)
- Assessments are too few and far apart for the course content

Self-Assessments

Rating: 0 (Not Evident)

Learner Support

Orientation to Course and LMS

The course does include an “Orientation” and “Overview” section. However, the “Learning Environment” section is incomplete and does not align with the current menu options. The “Navigating the Course” area could have included instructional content regarding discussion threads, submitting assignments, submitting tests, technical compatibility, etc.

Rating: 1

- Tutorial materials that are included do not support learning modalities
- Tutorial materials explaining how to navigate the LMS or the specific course may be included but are difficult to find, lack detail, are not well organized, or are incomplete

Supportive Software

Good job listing the supportive software. This should also be included in the “syllabus” or “handbook”.

Rating: 5

- Clear explanations of optional and/or required software including any additional costs are provided within the course
- Software required to use course materials is listed with links to where it can be captured and installed
- Links are located within the course where learners will use the software (i.e., near the materials requiring its use)

Instructor Role and Information

The course designer’s email was found within “Course Contributors” and “Course Contents” section. There are sections on their contact pages which include office hours and locations. Their titles are outlined, but no mention of the role they will play in facilitating and leading the course.

Rating: 2

- Contact information includes only one way to reach the instructor
- Information concerning response time for e-mail replies is not included
- Instructor’s role within the course is not clearly spelled out to students
- Instructor’s methods of collecting and returning work are confusing or non-existent;

Course/Institutional Policies & Support

The menu item “Summary” discusses the Edge Hill University continuing Education MOOC’s for practitioners. It also provides a link to the Edge Hill University’s Vascular MOOC. There are no policies or guidelines which are easily accessible from this link. The website has the institution’s policies and guidelines, but the learner must navigate intensely through the website to locate that information.

Rating: 1

- Links to some institutional policies, materials, and forms relevant for learner success (for example, plagiarism policies) are not included

Technical Accessibility Issues

Rating: 1

- Videos are streamed whenever possible; graphics are optimized for web delivery and display without needing extensive scrolling
- Course materials sometimes use standard formats to ensure accessibility

Accommodations for Disabilities

There are no descriptive text for the links. The YouTube videos do have the closed caption capabilities. The PowerPoint presentations offer voice and text.

Rating: 3

- The design and delivery of content integrate some alternative resources or enable assistive processes for those needing accommodation
- Supportive mechanisms allow some learners with disabilities to participate fully in the online community
- Links to institutional policies, contacts, and procedures to support learners with disabilities are not evident

Feedback**Rating: 2**

- Learners have the opportunity to give feedback to the instructor regarding course design or course content, but only after course completion
- Feedback mechanisms do not guarantee privacy to the student