Course Title

Advanced Fire Administration

Course Description

This course will allow students to analyze the fire service operations within emergency management. Students will examine the stakeholder that the fire service has within the EM field and prepare senior emergency management officials to manage the operational component of a rescue department during an emergency

Course Design

Goals and Objectives

The unit level objectives are not listed in the syllabus. The unit level objectives are only outlined in the Unit Study Guides. Objectives should be available in a variety of areas throughout the course. Ideally, the objectives should be in the syllabus and on the modular level.

> **Rating: 5**

Content Presentation

The content is chunked into manageable sections. Each section was consistent. Students will become familiar with the consistent format and should be able to locate resources without navigational obstacles. The "Points to Ponder" section of the study guides are interesting and entices one to read further. Great use of textbook materials and outside resources.

> **Rating: 6**

Learner Engagement

The "Learning Activities" section of the study guide is a great example how students can work with the content in a meaningful way. There could be more learning objects and activities to promote "higher order" thinking. Activities which assign students to: Construct, Demonstrate, Predict, Estimate, Evaluate, etc. are examples of how you could incorporate higher order thinking.

> **Rating: 5**

Technology Use

Great use of BB's internal quizzing feature for unit assessments. There could be more technology use to surpass traditional instructional practices, such as students provided an opportunity to work in groups and utilize BB's group features.

> **Rating: 4**

Interaction and Collaboration

Communication Strategies

The course's discussion boards provide opportunity for asynchronous communication among students. The discussion scenario's present higher order thinking. There are no synchronous communication options made apparent. A BB Collaborate live session could provide students an opportunity to synchronously meet and interact with one another and the professor.

Rating: 4

Development of a Learning Community

Discussion boards require peer-to-peer interactions. There are no opportunities for students to interact with the professor. To create a stronger student-student learning community, the course could have imposed peer review assignments. In addition to the "Ask the Professor" discussion thread, increased instructor-student interaction could be better achieved the professor communicating with students through follow up questions in the discussion boards. As the boards are not currently active, this may have been the professor's intention.

Rating: 3

Interaction Logistics

Grading rubrics are listed in the syllabus, but could have been included on the discussion board as a reminder. Moreover, acceptable responses could have been re-iterated for each thread as the context changed.

Rating: 5

Assessment

Expectations

The units that contain Assessments do not direct the learner to the appropriate objective in which the assessment measures. The learner is not informed how the assessment item aligns with the course or unit outcomes and objectives. There are no rubrics available in the course to describe appropriate criteria to achieve the desired outcomes. Learners are not informed of an ideal response to unit assessments. The instructions state: "*Grading Rubric found at the Academic Policies link on your Course Menu*", however, I was not able to locate it. Rubrics should be directly linked to the assessment. The course's assessments are open-ended and allows free-form answer entry, therefore, students may need more information on how to best answer the questions. As a grading table is available in the syllabus, keep in mind that a grading table is not a rubric. Rubrics explicitly represent performance expectations for an assignment; compartmentalize the assignment components and delivers specific explanations of desired assignment elements and characteristics that are aligned with each component. Moreover, rubrics measure content mastery at varying levels.

Rating: 2

Assessment Design

Unit II lists a learning outcome as: "*1.3 Discuss the value of experience and intuition in decision making*". However, no assessment to measure if students have actually achieved this outcome is present. Unit III lists a learning outcome as: "*Demonstrate an ability to develop and understand incident documentation, including risk, capability, and damage assessments. 5.1 Compose effective actions that are taken during Phase I of the incident action plan (IAP)."* There are no apparent assessments or activities tied to this outcome. There is a Unit III project, but there is no prompt (so it may be present in this assignment, but without a prompt, one can't distinguish). Unit VII lists a

learning outcome as: "*2.2 Analyze the need for standardized fire prevention and safety codes*." There are no apparent assessments or activities tied to this outcome.

     Rating: 3

Self-Assessment

Learners are provided multiple ways to self-assess. The journal assignments and non-graded assignments allows for reflection and information synthesis.

     Rating: 6

Learner Support

Orientation to Course and LMS

The course initiates with an "Introduction" section that clearly provides learners with a Blackboard Tutorial, recommended software, and feedback section. The Blackboard Tutorial is a PDF document, which meet standards for visual and text based learning modalities. However, if a learner needs to review the information in an audio format, this will not suffice. PDF's were not originally designed for screen reader technology. If your course has a learner with a disability that requires their use of a screen reader for audio, they may not be able to access the document. Some screen readers see PDF's as pictures and will not provide audio. Some screen reading technology reads PDF's perfectly fine, some don't. Keep in mind universal design principles.

     Rating: 3

Supportive Technologies

The "Introduction" section provides learners with recommended software. There are no secondary options listed as a back-up to provide students with more than one option. If there is no back-up software for the product, then it is not "recommended", it is "required".

     Rating: 3

Instructor and Information

A "Professor Profile" section is available in the course. This section provides the instructors professional experience and email address. Additionally, the instructor provides "Ask the Professor" discussion board, outlining response times. The instructor does not identify their role in the course. The instructor's role in the course communicates to learners their level of participation, interaction, etc., not simply if they will answer IT related questions or not.

     Rating: 5

Course/Institutional Policies & Support

Great "Resources" link in the course. An audio file to accompany this document would ensure increased accessibility. The "Student Handbook" link located within the "Student Resources "document, should "open in a new window". When the link is selected, it opens in the same window and does not allow "back" navigation. Learners may lose their place within the course and it may pose difficulty for an ADA student.

     Rating: 5

Technical Accessibility Issues

The "Welcome" video is self-hosted "inserted" into the course, as opposed to streamed or embedded. Videos that are simply uploaded to course present multiple challenges, specifically as more students attempt to play the self-hosted video due to bandwidth, file size, HTML 5 compatibility, etc. To avoid these challenges – stream or embed.

    Rating: 5

Accommodations for Disabilities

As I stated prior, be sure to offer course content in a universal design. Learners with visual impairment or those using text-to-speech may find frustration with navigating your course as many of the pages "open in new windows". Blackboard is developed and implemented in multiple frames that respond and mimic separate browser windows. To the visual user, it looks like one big window, but if you are using a screen reader to access the course, it is like navigating through several windows. When professors set up their course so that content "opens in a new window" it adds to the confusion because it becomes necessary to locate yet another window.

The "Attendance Verification" page in Unit 1 uses a red color to convey meaning . Using color to communicate important information is not ADA compliant. Some learners are color blind and may not be able to distinguish particular shades of red, blue or green.

The PDF documents on the course can be supplemented with Word formatted documents. Here's a great link to show how you can format your Word documents to remain ADA compliant: https://ualr.edu/pace/tenstepsud/wordhelp.htm. Additionally, PDF's are typically only accessible to screen readers if its presented in its original context. If it's a "scanned to PDF" document, the screen reader may treat the document as a photo/picture file.

    Rating: 1

Feedback

Awesome job in adding "Feedback" section to the course Introduction and in the "Ask the Professor" module. However, learners do not have an avenue to provide feedback anonymously. Therefore, they may be less likely to express any concerns due to fear of retaliation.

    Rating: 2