UHCL Internship/Practicum Minimum Standards Checklist - Explanations, Tips and Examples

	Please feel free to copy and paste any samples into your syllabus and modify/adapt to suit your individual style.	
ITEM	**SYLLABUS:**	
1	Is the course syllabus prominently displayed in the course and does it meet the minimum requirements for its designated college (e.g., BUS, COE, CSE, HSH)?	Arguably, the most critical item in a fully online course is the syllabus, which should be readily accessible, thorough, and which can easily be downloaded and printed by the student. Although specific requirements for syllabi may vary according to college or program/department requirements, there are some common elements that should always be prominently displayed in the document. These include the following: (1) the instructor's contact information, including a phone number and email address, (2) office hours, (3) a course description, (4) course goals and objectives, (5) any academic prerequisites. The syllabus should either appear on the entry point/landing page of the course or be made quickly accessible to students through the use of a link to it on the course menu.
2	Does the syllabus specify the course delivery mode as fully online?	The syllabus should clearly indicate that the course is fully online at the onset, so that there is no confusion about the delivery mode of the course. **Example:** BIOL5931- Research Topics in Biology - Urban Ecology (fully online course)
3	Does it state the required materials such as texts or software?	All required materials text or software requirements must be stated in the syllabus.

4	Are any technical skills required for the course clearly stated on the syllabus?	Although we may think that our students are "digital natives," with a vast array of technical knowledge and skills, the ability of many learners to text, tweet, and otherwise use technology does not always translate to them possessing the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in a fully online course. Letting students know early in the course what technical skills are necessary for their success is an important component of the syllabus in a fully online course. **Example:** To be successful in an online course, you will need to have at least the following basic computer literacy skills: • open and close applications • create folders for file organization • create, save, modify and delete application files • copy and paste information between applications • navigate the internet and web-based applications • use email • save information to external storage devices
5	Is there a policy stated about student lack of participation or non-communication?	**Example 1:** Students who stop participating in the online class without officially dropping the course will receive a failing grade in the course. **Example 2:** As a student, it is your responsibility to keep up with the required assignments and alert me as to any unavoidable non-communication. **Example 3:** Students are expected to attend class regularly by participating in online discussions at least once per week by posting a meaningful, substantive response to discussion questions and at least two responses to postings of other students. Participation points will be worth X points per week, for a total of X points for the whole course, which is X% of your final grade.

6	Does the instructor list their policies on late work?	**Example:** Please follow the deadlines on the Course Schedule for submitting all assignments. The penalty for late work is X% per day. If you have family or medical circumstances that prevent you from meeting deadlines or keeping up with the course, please email me as soon as possible.
7	Does the instructor list their policies on incompletes?	**Example 1:** Incompletes: A grade of "I" is granted only when a documented emergency arises late in the semester. An "I" is not an option for someone who has been behind all semester. A grade contract must be completed with your instructor. If you are running into problems with the course, please contact me as early as possible so you do not fall behind.
8	Does the syllabus clearly state the frequency and context of instructor-to-student interaction?	For example, through email, feedback, chat sessions, discussion boards. This is a minimum requirement, and ideally students will communicate with the instructor multiple times during the course.
9	Does the instructor list their policies on grading/grading scales?	Instructor can choose how to present this; just make sure to include this in the syllabus. Also, ensure that any assignments/activities that are graded in Blackboard accurately reflect point values specified in the syllabus.
10	Does the instructor explain how the student receives feedback on their assignments regarding to turn-around time for grade postings and communication?	Assignments will be submitted in Blackboard and will be graded within 7 business days of the assignment due date (assuming that work was submitted by the deadline). Students will be able to retrieve their scores for each assignment, along with feedback from the instructor via the My Grades link on the course menu.

11	Does the instructor state the minimum amount of time (such as hours per week) that students could expect to spend on the course and activities to be successful?	**Example 1 (refers to the entire course):** Students should expect to spend 3-4 hours per week with the courseware. This does not include the time spent with the reading material or researching material on the Internet. The time spent on preparing assignments and discussion posts depends upon each student's ability. **Example 2 (refers to one sample activity):** Students can expect to spend 2-4 weeks on preliminary research, 3 weeks on the rough draft, and another 3 weeks on the final paper. Please manage your time wisely.
12	If synchronous communication is required, is the time and date clearly stated?	**Example 1:** Weekly live Collaborate sessions will be held on Tuesdays from 8:00 pm until 9:00 pm. All sessions will be recorded/archived for future reference. Students must attend at least four of the scheduled 12 weekly Collaborate sessions. **Example 2 [optional]:** No online meetings are required. All communication will be asynchronous.
13	**BUS ONLY:** Does the instructor provide information about test proctoring (Proctor U)?	
SYLLABUS / UNIVERSITY POLICIES		
14	Does the instructor state their policy concerning academic honesty and cheating?	**Example:** ACADEMIC HONESTY CODE – The Academic Honesty Policy at UHCL (available in the UHCL catalog) states: *Academic honesty is the cornerstone of the academic integrity of the university. It is the foundation upon which the student builds personal integrity and establishes a standard of personal behavior. Because honesty and integrity are such important factors in the professional community, you should be aware that failure to perform within the bounds of these ethical standards is sufficient grounds to receive an "F" in this course and be recommended for suspension or expulsion from UHCL.*

15	Is the last drop date listed for the semester, expressed EITHER as a specific date (in the syllabus OR schedule) OR provided as a link to the given semester's calendar page?	**Example 1:** LAST DAY TO DROP: The last day to withdraw from this course without grade penalty is DATE HERE. Withdrawals from the course must be filed in the Office of Enrollment Services. **Example 2:** The last date for drop without academic penalty is listed on the Academic Records Calendar. You are responsible for independently verifying the drop date. Tip: Link to the UHCL Academic Calendar
16	Does the instructor state their willingness to accommodate students with disabilities?	**Recommended Verbiage (Received from UHCL's Disability Services Office, 08/06/2018):** If you believe that you have a disability requiring an academic adjustment/auxiliary aid, please contact Disability Services by phone at 281-283-2648, or email disability@uhcl.edu, or go to the office in the Student Services Building (SSCB), Room 1.302. The University of Houston System complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, pertaining to the provision of reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids for students with a disability. In accordance with Section 504 and ADA guidelines, each University within the System strives to provide reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids to students who request and require them.
COURSE STRUCTURE		
17a	**BUS ONLY:** Are the Academic Honesty Resources folder and quiz in the course?	
17b	**BUS ONLY:** Is content adaptively released base on Academic Honesty Pledge Quiz?	

18	Is there an instructor introduction?	An instructor introduction can take many forms ranging from a brief welcome message to a short video. At a minimum. Your introduction should include some information about yourself (especially about why you are passionate about your subject), reinforce critical course requirements, and stress faculty and student expectations about the course. **Tip:** Create a Discussion Thread for introductions – you can post the first introduction yourself; try to include some personal information, not just a CV, in order to let the students get to know you a bit. **Tip:** Work with your designated Instructional Designer (ID) to create an introductory video, or capture your own video with a webcam.
19	Are the tools needed to support student-teacher interaction (in reference to item #8, above) present within the course?	
20	Are there activities that encourage students to communicate with each other, including at a minimum, a student introductory activity (e.g., discussion, blog)?	One of the key elements that distinguishes excellent online courses from online versions of old-fashioned "correspondence courses" is the interactivity between instructor and students and students among themselves. This interactivity may take many forms. Instructors often use Blackboard's Announcement feature, Course Messages tool, UHCL Email, feedback, student journals, and discussion forums or blogs to interact with students, both individually and as a class. Interaction among students may be promoted through discussion forums, group activities, blogs, wikis, and course messages. **Note:** Even courses that may not typically lend themselves to traditional topic-based discussions can support interactivity through the use of an introductory discussion, in which students can become acquainted and a "Students Helping Students" or similar open and unmoderated discussion forum.

21	Is there a course calendar or schedule of activities and assignments clearly provided in the course, EITHER within the syllabus OR as a separate document?	A detailed schedule, providing students with a clear expectation of topics and requirements throughout the course, is often provided in the course syllabus; however, it is recommended (but not required) that this same information be copied from the syllabus and deployed as a separate schedule document in the Blackboard course, providing much faster access for students to critical dates and benchmarks throughout the semester.
22	If the use of online resources outside of Blackboard (e.g., library, web sites, software) is required, are links to those resources provided within the course?	Provide relevant resources when possible. Keep in mind that the resources should be used to help the student understand the materials and specific instructional tasks in the course. **Tip:** Enlist the assistance of the librarians to provide Lib-Guides or links to other articles or websites relevant to the course. Consider providing links to relevant professional organization websites, job postings in the field, or current events.
23	Is the course organized in a way that promotes easy student navigation in the course (e.g., use of folder structure in weeks, units, modules, or other "chunked" segments)?	Instructors should try to chunk their content in modules, chapters, topics or weekly formats and align then with the course and weekly objectives in the Blackboard. **Tip:** Use folders to organize your content into modules or units with the focus on specific topics so students can orient themselves and reduce confusion.
24	Does each instructional section have learning objectives written from the student perspective? **(Not evaluated for Internship/Practicum courses only)**	The objectives should be supported by the activities, thus creating a format that will allow the instructors and the students to stay organized. **Tip:** Module or unit level learning objectives are important for the students to help guide and focus students, serving as a sense of "what's in it for me?" when starting a new section of instruction and helping to focus them on the most critical content elements while studying. They are also important for instructors, providing a framework around which the development of course contents are selected and/or developed.

25	Does each instructional section list the activities and assignments that go with it? **(Not evaluated for Internship/Practicum courses only)**	Each instructional section should contain instructions about required readings, assignments, discussions, and activities, serving as a "to do" list to assist students in successfully in meeting the objectives of each instructional unit.
26	Do all course links, videos, and other multimedia contents function properly (including opening in a new window)? **(Not evaluated for Internship/Practicum courses only)**	The course (and the syllabus) must be checked for broken links and audio or video files that are no longer working (this can happen often and unexpectedly when using web-based resources, such as YouTube videos that are not your own). **Tip:** Set all links to "Open in a New Window" to provide the easiest navigation for students.
27	Are there links provided for students to quickly access UHCL academic (either a left menu link or the "Academic Support" item on a content page) and technical support?	**Tip:** Place a link to the Blackboard student support page and the link to UHCL's academic support resources in the left-hand navigation area. We strongly discourage providing Blackboard support links that are not managed by either UHCL or Blackboard. Other institution's support resources may reference versions of Blackboard and related Blackboard tools/features that are not used at UHCL, as well as contact information for technical support offices at those institutions, which can cause tremendous student confusion and frustration.

28	Is there a place for the student to evaluate the course and their satisfaction in it? **BUS: Is there a prominent statement that the course evaluation link will be emailed to students by BUS?**	**Tip**: For courses in COE, CSE, and HSH, place a link to UHCL's course evaluation survey tool on your course menu. For courses in COB (using the IDEA survey tool), prominently place an announcement or text item in your course that explains how students will access that survey. **Example 1 (COE, CSE, and HSH):** Course Menu link called Course Evaluation, set to open in a new window, and pointing to the Evaluation Tool. Instructions on how to add this link are available on UCT's Faculty Blackboard Support web site. **Example 2 (BUS):** All College of Business courses use the IDEA survey for course evaluation. Students will be emailed a link to that survey toward the end of the semester. Please ensure that you are receiving UHCL-related emails, either through your UHCL account or by having your UHCL email forwarded to your non-UHCL email address to ensure that you receive the evaluation link and other critical UHCL notifications throughout the semester.
ASSIGNMENTS:		
29	Are the directions to the assignments and activities posted easy to understand and located within proximity of the tool being used (e.g., with the drop box, in the discussion instructions)?	What can seem to instructors as common practice, such as expectations about term papers and other assignments, may not be as clear to students, who often struggle with a variety of different expectations and requirements from one course to the next. Therefore, including a clear description, instructions, and expectation for all assignments and activities (e.g., papers, discussion boards, journals, and essay tests) is critical to student success and to limiting student questions about those items. Ideally, the assignment description will also be in close proximity to its location in the course (not just described in the syllabus). **Tip:** Get feedback from a peer, student, or instructional designer to learn if your assignment directions are clear and easily understood. The more specific you can be with your instructions, the better.

30	Does the instructor list any expectations or provide instructions about how to submit assignments, upload files, or post on the bulletin board?	**Example 1 (Setting Expectations):** Please upload your paper in a Word document format or a PDF only. No other formats will be accepted. **Example 2 (Setting Expectations):** Discussion board postings must consist of a substantive response to the discussion question of at least 200 words using correct grammar and spelling. **Example 3 (Instructions):** Provide a folder containing links to handouts on critical Blackboard skills (e.g., submitting assignments, participating in discussions, taking online tests/quizzes) in your course. Your designated instructional designer can assist you with this step, as that team has a folder already available that they can copy into your course, upon request.
31	Does the instructor specify how activities, assessments, and assignments will be graded, OR provide a rubric?	Detailed information about how assignments, activities, and assessments will be evaluated and scored should ideally be posted in close proximity to its location in the course (not just described in the syllabus). Whether this information is provided in a document, simple text, or via Blackboard's rubric tool is at the instructor's discretion. **Tip:** Include rubrics that contain all the key elements of the assignment with a breakdown of how each element will be graded and weighted. To learn more about creating and using grading rubrics in Blackboard, please consult with your designated Instructional Designer (ID).