PROCEDURE

Title: Master Course Standard Guideline
Type: Academic
Department: Office of the Senior Vice President, Academic
Procedure Number: ACAD-028-PR2
Effective Date: May 22, 2026
Next Review: May 22, 2031

PROCEDURE

A single Master Course must be created, maintained, or updated on the College's LMS for every course being offered in an upcoming academic year to ensure an optimal and consistent student experience both within and across programs of study. This guideline will provide the minimum standards to ensure that any qualified faculty member (part-time or full-time) or instructor with content knowledge assigned to teach a section of a course, regardless of delivery mode, be it in-person, online or hybrid (synchronous or asynchronous) will have the course information needed to successfully deliver/teach a course, even on short notice.

This Master Course Standard Guideline sets minimum requirements that are reflected in the Northern College Course Quality Review Checklist which is updated regularly to reflect good practices in curriculum design and teaching and learning. Master Course Writers should reference the Northern College Course Quality Review Checklist throughout the creation and maintenance of all master courses.

1. **Creating and Maintaining a Master Course**
   In addition to all the required elements listed in the Northern College Course Quality Review Checklist, all Master Courses will contain the following information:

   a. **Course Outline**: A Course Outline developed and approved in COMMS and shared with students in PDF format.
   b. **Course Section Information**: A Course Section Information (CSI) in Word format so the faculty/instructor can add their information, that aligns to the course outline, and includes a detailed schedule of topics, assessment types, and weighting.
   c. **Contact Information**: A Contact Information location for the faculty member/instructor to be entered when they are assigned to the course. This section can include preferred method(s) of electronic communication, faculty

member's/instructor's intended response times to student inquiries and return dates/timelines of student evaluations and assignments, which is within 10 business days.

d. **Getting Started**: A 'Getting Started' folder or module informing students how to navigate the LMS and where to find technical and learning supports.
e. **Learning Objectives and Instructional Materials**: A Learning Objectives and Instructional Materials section for the course lesson plan, content allowable through Canada's copyright legislation and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) compliance. This section also include an introduction, statement of learning outcomes, lecture notes, presentation slides, learning activity, formative/summative assessment activities, and a lesson summary, as appropriate for the course.
f. **Assessments (no dates):** Assessments for the semester including formative assignments/activities that are designed for student practice (no marks) like in-class activities, use of educational technology tools and practice quizzes set up in the LMS, as well as summative assessments (for marks) like assignments, tests, quizzes, projects, rubrics, answer keys, and exemplars, in alignment with the course outline and as appropriate to the course.
g. **Critical Dates**: A location for the faculty/instructor assigned to teach the course to indicate critical dates detailing how late or missed deadlines will be handled.
h. **Course Material**: All course material including links to videos, documents, websites and required textbooks to support student learning.
i. **Gradebook:** The gradebook on the College's LMS will be set up and used to provide students with information on their course progress and grades associated with assignments, quizzes, tests and projects as well as to calculate the final weighted grade.
j. **Course Resource Folder:** The course resource folder contains materials for alternate versions of tests, quizzes and assignments, the approved course outlines (annually reviewed and approved) and course section information (CSI), Course Outline Mapping a Management (COMMS) outcomes report, other Northern College owned and produced course materials, a copy of the student manual/handbook and other relevant documents.

2. Training

Training on Blackboard Ultra and Master Course Development can be found using the provided hyperlinks and in the LEID website.

3. Timelines for Completion and Revisions

All Master Courses must be created, maintained, or updated by the end of June prior to the start of a new academic year in September.

4. Additional Resources

More information and resources on how to use the LMS and how to create courses that include the minimum requirements are available on Northern College's

Learning Excellence and Innovation Department (LEID) website, https://www.northerncollege.ca/leid/blackboard/.

REFERENCES

- A-28 Digital/Technology – Enhanced Learning Policy
- A-28-PR1 Using the College's Learning Management System (LMS) to Provide Students Access to Essential Digital Resources and Learning Activities Procedure

REVISION LOG

Date of Revision	Summary of Changes
2025-March-24	Updated the title of the procedure from Master Course Guideline to Master Course Standard Guideline. Provided additional details about the purpose of the Master Course and the guidelines. Revised and enhanced the previous version with additional structure, clarity and expectations for creation and revisions to the Master Course in the LMS by including a description of the elements that are included in the Master Course shell. Included new section and provided links to related documents and training materials
2026-September-23	Transferred procedure to the new Procedure Template