AT&T FACULTY-STAFF AWARDS IN INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY
2013-2014 Faculty-Staff Competition
Course APPLICATION FORM

Course Identifier: VM 810 (section 730)
Course Name: Introduction to Food Safety and Professional Management
Department: Large Animal Clinical Sciences (LCS) College: Veterinary Medicine

Primary contact name, phone number, and email (normally this will be the lead instructor)

Heather Ricks, 884-2079, ricksh@msu.edu

Faculty and Staff Involved in Developing and Offering the Course please list full name, position at MSU, email address, and project role for each person

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>MSU Affiliation</th>
<th>PROJECT ROLE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heather Ricks</td>
<td>Academic Specialist</td>
<td>Course Design and Course Moderator</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ricksh@msu.edu">ricksh@msu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heidi Chen</td>
<td>Academic Technology Coordinator</td>
<td>Instructional Design &amp; Technology</td>
<td><a href="mailto:chenhaom@msu.edu">chenhaom@msu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peggy Trommater</td>
<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
<td>Course Design</td>
<td><a href="mailto:trommat2@msu.edu">trommat2@msu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristie Denbrock</td>
<td>Consortium Coordinator</td>
<td>Course Design</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kristied@msu.edu">kristied@msu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie Funk</td>
<td>Program Director and Associate Professor</td>
<td>Course Design</td>
<td><a href="mailto:funkj@msu.edu">funkj@msu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Irvin</td>
<td>Producer</td>
<td>Videographer</td>
<td><a href="mailto:irvin@msu.edu">irvin@msu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
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Which Competition Are You Entering (select one):

_X__ FULLY ONLINE COURSE (no required face to face component)
___ BLENDED/HYBRID OR FLIPPED COURSE (some face to face learning is replaced by online learning)
___ TECHNOLOGY-ENHANCED LEARNING INNOVATION (one specific technology innovation in a face-to-face, blended, flipped, or online course)

Semester(s) offered in 2013-2014 and number of students enrolled:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>SEMESTER</th>
<th># STUDENTS</th>
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<td>70</td>
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<tr>
<td>SS14</td>
<td>38</td>
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I. Course Description (400 word limit)

VM 810 was originally created as a blended course when the Online Master of Science in Food Safety degree program which initially began in 2002. Transforming this course to fully online in 2013 created an opportunity for the program to replicate the valued elements of the original blended version, while creating new features and academic topics within the online environment. One of the first decisions made was to require new students to take this course in their first semester, thus creating a connection to the program and the MSU community at the beginning of the student's MSU experience. The course offers introductions to staff and faculty, featured alumni, and fellow student professionals while orienting students to multiple aspects of their new online academic learning environment.

This online version of VM 810 consists of three elements each week (or module): MSU Toolbox, Hot Topics in Food Safety, and Leadership. MSU Toolbox covers items students need to know about being a Spartan such as using the MSU library and other online systems; how to begin the required Applied Project; highlights of beloved icons on campus; specific alumni resources; and an in-depth academic advising orientation which includes how to plan and enroll in courses, how to maintain good academic standing, and what to expect when wrapping up the degree. Hot Topics in Food Safety provides the students with an overview of industry and academic perspectives on topics related to their professional field and also a preview of aspects of the program curriculum as well as exposure to select faculty. The Leadership section features ways to consider leadership, management, and individual and organizational change as it directly relate to students’ professional work environments.

Lectures, extra material, and assignments in each of these three categories were created for each module to create a consistent pattern of content expectation for the students.

Through quizzes and discussion forums, utilizing Drop boxes and social media, students were assessed on their mastery of subject matter, their completion of tasks, and their ability to integrate their professional experience with the course subject matter.

II. Learning and Interaction Goals of the Course or Technology-enhanced Innovation

Background information: The course was originally created as a blended course when the Online Master of Science in Food Safety degree program was begun in 2002. Designed for a specialized target audience, the original course introduced a broad range of food safety topics to the students while bringing them on campus for two weeks for networking opportunities with their fellow food safety professionals and faculty. Additionally, because the program is a Professional Science Masters degree, the original VM 810 blended course incorporated leadership curriculum as required. The course was designed as one of seven requirements of the degree (paired with three electives) and could be taken at any point over the student’s program.

Over time, this blended course was reduced to one week on campus and maintained a similar format (online material including leadership curriculum using Kouzes & Posner self-assessments, an on-campus component that featured face-to-face interaction with and lectures by MSU faculty in the field of food safety, and various field trips around campus and the state of Michigan).

In 2012, we were charged to increase the program enrollment. Because of this, our program needed to develop a new version of VM 810 to move the program completely online and eliminate the requirement for students to come to campus. While we regretted losing that in-person connection to students, we found this to be an opportunity to expand the VM 810 course into a full semester and to include curriculum that not only maintained that connection to campus and faculty but highlighted important introductory elements for new students. We decided to make the course required as the first course in the program for all new students. With
a hope to prepare students for online learning and the rigor of graduate study, our approach was two-fold. First, we created a scaffold for student understanding of technology systems: D2L orientation, online MSU systems (enrollment, billing, etc), preparing for online learning (learning styles assessment), and general information as it relates to academic policies at MSU (academic performance and good standing, plagiarism, etc). Second, we introduced important course topics and experts that represent a survey of the field of food safety and we expanded the leadership elements of the course. Contributions for these elements were gathered from approximately twenty instructors representing the broad spectrum of food-related disciplines.

Finally, it is important to note that our students our typically mid-career, in their mid-30s, and full-time professionals who are attempting to integrate academic learning with their regular work and personal responsibilities. Most of them come from the food industry (75%) while there are some who work in government or non-profit organizations and others who are pursuing a dual degree in programs such as Veterinary Medicine or Public Health.

Learning and Interaction Outcomes:
[From course syllabus]

By completing this course, students will:
• Gain an understanding of how to navigate the online systems at MSU
• Understand and express basic competency to use the MSU library resources
• Understand MSU and program policies and regulations (related to academic performance)
• Make an academic plan related to their intended course work
• Develop self-knowledge (MBTI, learning style)
• Be introduced to the program instructors and learn about the program courses
• Begin to connect with current students and alumni and develop ways to keep connected
• Identify with and take pride in a connection to MSU
• Identify current and emerging food safety issues
• Communicate their passion for food safety
• Develop a process and timeline for identifying researchable applied projects in food safety

III. Points of Interest and Innovation

Structure
A consistent structure to the course was one of the first elements we determined as necessary for a course designed as the first in the program for all new students. As their introduction to online learning, we wanted to be certain that there was a regular pattern and consistency to the weekly modules. This also aligns with our belief in a holistic approach to learning in this course. Each module has content related to the main three components of the content: MSU Toolbox (20%), Hot
Topics in Food Safety (40%), and Leadership (40%).

Community Building

Our second focus was on community building. As a replacement for the only on-campus course in the program, we feel that the new online version of the course was extremely successful in creating an immediate virtual relationship to the MSU campus as well as a connection to other students, the program staff, and the core faculty.

This was achieved in multiple formats including the use of short videos and tutorials, optional audio recording of the students, and various visual elements including self-portraits.
Additionally, students participated in on-going peer-to-peer conversation in discussion forums; real-time student-faculty discussion and online office hours via Adobe Connect chat rooms; and short, scaffolded introductions and informal peer-to-peer learning in a closed Facebook group.

Students discussing and applying the risk communication concepts they learned in the course.
We created assignments to foster a connection to campus. These included quizzes related to the featured campus icon videos. Students especially enjoyed the trivia – in both semesters one of the most popular videos describes how Buckeye Blitz ice cream is made at the Dairy Store.

Additionally, we created an “Ask the Director” bonus credit assignment housed in a discussion forum in which all students can follow and participate.

Other course elements designed to create community include a map of current student locations.
Each module opens with a faculty, staff, or featured alumni video on the course home page. With these videos is a Twitter feed from our program account – it is our hope that this will highlight one way that students can follow the MSFS program’s on-going connection to the larger food safety community.

Experience

The course content in the MSU Toolbox was successfully created to help students to navigate the online systems at MSU.

A Getting Started module was included before the first module and was made available to students one week before the start of the semester. This module included a technology quiz intended to test a student’s preparation for online learning, tips for using D2L, and information on how to get started in the Facebook group.
Understanding of how to utilize the MSU library system from a remote location is crucial for our students. Video tutorials from MSU Librarian, Anita Ezzo, were used to demonstrate a basic overview of the library homepage, how to search the library catalog for journals and other material, how to use specific resources related to food safety research, and how to request materials from other libraries. Additionally, students participated in an ask-the-librarian discussion forum.

To create a virtual academic orientation to both university and program policies, students were presented with Adobe lectures and assessments related to topics such as academic performance, course planning, and requirements for graduation.
The Hot Topics in Food Safety section features weekly content experts from academia, industry, and government. About 20 instructors from all over the country contribute to the content on food safety hot topics. Adobe Presenter lectures are delivered throughout the course and provide a general preview of the program curriculum.

There were also weekly opportunities for online office hours with the course moderator via Adobe Connect.

Finally, the redesigned and expanded leadership component of the course was created to feature facilitated group work in small teams and utilizes Adobe Connect chat rooms.

**Critical reflection**

Multiple assessment tools were utilized to help determine student learning. Students were graded based on participation in discussion forums and a private social media group, short answer and multiple choice quiz responses, individual reflections via Drop box, as well as small group assignments via Adobe Connect chat.
rooms. Bonus points were available for singing the MSU fight song and posting a question to the program director.

Self-reflected learning was included throughout the course. Our goal was to assist the students in approaching the graduate curriculum critically and to assist them in considering various ways of learning in their transition back to school. Self-assessments included Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), Jones-Belbin Team Assessment, and varied learning style material including Right Brain/Left Brain analysis and Reading and Remembering techniques.

IV. Accessibility

Creating specific accessibility features is a component of the on-going course development plan.

V. Evidence of Effectiveness with Students

Student feedback was gathered at the end of the Fall semester via Survey Monkey. We were pleased to have responses from 54 of the eligible 67 students. Overall, the student responses were positive. When asked how the course met their expectations (new students) and whether the material would have been worthwhile earlier in the program (continuing students), a majority of both groups responded with extremely or very worthwhile (80% and 69%, respectively).
Students expressed a positive connection to the class community and the larger university.

- “I really enjoyed all of the things we did that helped us get to know MSU and feel part of the university student body. I think that’s a huge challenge of online programs, but I thought this course did a great job accomplishing just that…”
- “I really enjoyed the videos about the school, just being able to connect is a big part of school and I think you miss out on that with online schooling.”
- “Learning about MSU since it's likely I'll never actually set foot on campus.”

Students also expressed an appreciation for the variety of food safety topics and the preview of curriculum and faculty.

- “…I also really enjoyed hearing from different professors each week- gave a ‘preview’ of sorts for future classes!”
- “I really enjoyed the hot topics and how I could apply them to the job or, vice-versa, how I could apply my work experiences to the assignments or discussions.”

Finally, students shared an appreciation for the depth of the leadership and self-assessment content and many shared how these elements directly and immediately impacted their professional experiences.

- “I think the Leadership sections helped you to understand how you fit into a company and how you can place yourself in better positions to succeed.”
- “I really liked learning about my personality preferences and how to relate to other personalities. I also liked learning about how I learn and my team preferences. I feel it made me grow as a person and a leader and has helped me to expand beyond my comfort zone a little at a time.”
- “I was able to begin using the information at work when appointing workgroups, making assignments understanding better our organization’s structure and direction.”

Other responses

- “The three different sections for each module was nice. We learned a little about MSU and the program, covered a variety of relevant topics in food safety and were given the opportunity to develop our leadership skills all in the same course.”
- “Just finished reading the comments and want to pass on my congratulations to you and the team for making people feel like they are a part of MSU and the [MSFS] program! Not easy to do online!” Theresa Bernardo, MSU faculty
- “I love how you were able to create the (virtual) connection to MSU for these students.” Mark Moorman, MSFS Advisory Council

VI. Plans for Sustainability

- Continue updating food safety hot topics content to provide the most cutting edge knowledge in the field
- Continue updating the leadership component to meet students needs and balance course content
- Make lectures available in PDF and/or portable format (for download)
- Add digital literacy material to help our students prepare and take advantage of the technologies available to support their learning
- Develop a remix of students singing the fight song
- Transcribe all lecture material