

Assessing The Quality Of High School Online Courses In The Context Of University Admissions

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UC's Role in High School Courses

- In 1928, UC established subject requirements that limited what high school courses would be accepted as “college preparatory”
- Eventually, this led to a specific pattern of courses that is now known as “a-g”
- High school courses are only deemed “college preparatory” for the purposes of UC and CSU admission if they are on the school’s “a-g” list

The University and 'a-g'

“The intent of the ‘a-g’ subject requirements is to ensure that students have attained a body of general knowledge that will provide breadth and perspective to new, more advanced study.”

“These courses are to be academically challenging, involving substantial reading, writing, problems and laboratory work (as appropriate), and show serious attention to analytical thinking, factual content and developing students' oral and listening skills.”

<http://www.ucop.edu/agguide/a-g-requirements/index.html>

So What About Online Courses?

- UC has recently updated its procedures for reviewing online course for inclusion on schools' "a-g" lists.
- It involves a review of the extent to which a course satisfies a set of standards proposed by the International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL)
- It involves a review of the extent to which a course covers content as specified by State standards, or the Common Core.

iNACOL National Standards for Quality Online Courses

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VERSION 2

National Standards for Quality Online Courses

iNACOL
International Association for K-12 Online Learning



iNACOL National Standards for Quality Online Courses

- A set of 52 standards in the areas of:
 - A. Content
 - B. Instructional Design
 - C. Student Assessment
 - D. Technology
 - E. Course Evaluation & Support

University Policy (K-12 Online Learning)



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A-G
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Online learning

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UC aims to ensure that students have enhanced access to a broad range of high-quality online courses that maintain the "human touch" and integrity of assessment.

University Policy (K-12 Online Learning)

An online course will be considered for “a-g” approval if it has satisfied:

- 15 “Power Standards” of the 52 overall iNACOL Standards for Quality Online Courses
- 27 of the remaining iNACOL standards (thereby satisfying ~80% of the standards)
- 80% of the relevant State of CCSS standards

A Few of the “Power Standards”

In order to be CLRN Certified, a course must:

A3: Be of sufficient rigor, depth & breadth

B4: Provide multiple learning paths

C3: Offer ongoing, varied & frequent assignments

D4: Conform to web content accessibility guidelines

E3: Be updated periodically to ensure currency

UC and the California Learning Resource Network (CLRN)

- CLRN is supported by the California Department of Education to provide educators “with a “one-stop” resource for critical information needed for the selection of supplemental electronic learning resources aligned to academic content standards.” (<http://www.clrn.org/home/>)
- CLRN performs a review of course quality (iNACOL standards) and content standards
- All reviews are published on their website
- Courses meeting the requirements to submit to UC for “a-g” approval are identified as “CLRN Certified”



CLRN Certified

List View

Graphic View

Title	Grade(s)	Content Standards	Online Standards	Publisher
Class.com Geometry 1A/1B	9,10,11,12	21 of 22	52 of 52	Class.com (Cambium Learning)
Class.com Algebra 1A/1B	9	25 of 29	52 of 52	Class.com (Cambium Learning)
MTH403: Trigonometry	11,12	18 of 20	52 of 52	K12 Inc.
Accelerate Education - Geometry	9,10,11,12	22 of 22	52 of 52	Accelerate Education
Geometry - California	9,10,11,12	22 of 22	50 of 52	Aventa Learning
MTH510: AP Statistics	11,12	19 of 19	52 of 52	K12 Inc.
MTH203: Geometry	8,9,10,11,12	22 of 22	52 of 52	K12 Inc.
Education2020 Algebra II	8,9,10,11,12	24 of 27	52 of 52	Education2020
PLATO Course Geometry A/B	8,9,10,11,12	20 of 22	44 of 52	PLATO Learning, Inc.

CLRN Certified?

Only one of these four online English courses would be CLRN Certified

List View

Graphic View

Title	Grade(s)	Content Standards	Online Standards
Education2020 English-Language Arts Grade 9	9,10	99 of 106	52 of 52
English II A/B	10	98 of 106	41 of 52
English I A/B	9	86 of 106	39 of 52
English II	9,10	76 of 106	40 of 52



CLRN Certified

(LEGEND: D=Introduces and Provides for Systematic Development, P=Practice, A=Assessment)

(Key: ● = Met ○ = Partially Met ⊘ = Not Met)

Grade 8-12	Detail	Standard Present
Strand: Geometry		
1.0 Students demonstrate understanding by identifying and giving examples of undefined terms, axioms, theorems, and inductive and deductive reasoning.	D P A	●
2.0 Students write geometric proofs, including proofs by contradiction.	D P A	●
3.0 Students construct and judge the validity of a logical argument and give counterexamples to disprove a statement.	D P A	●
4.0 Students prove basic theorems involving congruence and similarity.	D P A	●

CLRN Certified

Online Standards

Online Course Standards Review

● = Met ○ = Partially Met ⊘ = Not Met

(* = Power Standard required for CLRN-Certified courses)

Standard	Present	Additional Information
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A. Content

Academic Content Standards and Assessments

A1. The goals and objectives clearly state what the participants will know or be able to do at the end of the course. The goals and objectives are measurable in multiple ways.



A2. The course content and assignments are aligned with the state's content standards or nationally/internationally accepted content standards set for Advanced Placement courses, technology, computer science, or other courses whose content is not included in the state standards.



A3. The course content and assignments are of sufficient rigor, depth and breadth to teach the standards being addressed.*



A4. Information literacy and communication skills are incorporated and taught as an integral part of the curriculum.



Model Library Standards Addressed

- 1.1 Recognize the need for information.
- 1.2 Formulate appropriate questions
- 2.1 Determine relevance of information.
- 2.3 Consider the need for additional information.
- 3.2 Draw conclusions and make informed decisions.
- 3.3 Use information and technology creatively to answer a question, solve a problem, or enrich understanding.

Does This Process Ensure “Quality”?

- No. But it allows online course publishers and virtual schools a clear pathway to “a-g” approval.
- There has been evidence that online courses are already being revised to meet both the content and the course quality standards.
- We see this as an early step in an ongoing process toward improving quality of online courses that intend to be considered college preparatory.
- There is no mechanism yet to assess student outcomes in terms of success at UC or CSU.