



# Examining Online Course Quality Design Elements: What Student's Find Most and Least Valuable

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## BACKGROUND

This project is descriptive. It is designed to reexamine Quality Design Elements (QDEs) for online courses as defined by MarylandOnline, Inc., in their 3-year FIPSE grant project. This organization conducted extensive research to identify from the *instructor's* perspective key online course features of value and to provide guidelines for online course development. This research is to ask *students* whether they too find such features of use, and to also identify which are more valuable than others, and which (if any) correlate with various factors related to student learning, such as satisfaction, anxiety, commitment, and time management.

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## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Which QDEs do students find most valuable?  
Do any QDEs correlate with factors related to student learning?

- Satisfaction?
- Anxiety?
- Commitment?

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## METHODS

- Descriptive research.
- Quantitative online survey design.
- A random sample of 3,000 students.
- Respondents will be at least 18 years of age and currently enrolled (Spring 2007).
- Participation is voluntary, anonymous and confidential.

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## ANALYSES

Basic descriptive statistics will be performed on collected data, including central tendencies for QDEs (e.g., mean, mode, medians), measures of association (i.e., Pearson's correlation), and regression analyses (i.e., OLS Regression). Results will provide a detailed picture from the point of view of students of QDEs in terms of value and any association with factors related to e-learning.

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## FUTURE

- Design and administration of online survey.
- Data analyses.
- Reporting and submission to SoTL journal.