

Online Course Delivery and Presentation

Standard 10.1 – Organization of Course Content

Standard 10.1.1 – Content within online courses must be presented in lesson format with in-depth coverage of the various topics listed within the National Boating Education Standards in effect at the time the online course is presented for review and throughout the approved period. The content will be presented in a narrative fashion utilizing a consistent style throughout the course in terms of headings, titles, labels and font that is easy to read.

Standard 10.1.2 – A table of contents or site map will be available to show the organization of the course content. Students will know that they have already viewed the course content upon receiving a cue that a particular task/section has been completed.

Standard 10.1.3 – Online courses must be organized into multiple chapters with a chapter review quiz at the end of each chapter. The course will be designed such that any advancement through the course is initiated by the action of the student (for example, by the student clicking on a “next” button). There will be no automatic advancement provided. “Chapter” can be as defined as a module, section, unit or any other segmentation of materials within a course.

Standard 10.1.4 – If animations or video clips are used within an online course, the student must be able to re-play the instructional segments of the animation or video.

Rationale – An online boating safety course is, essentially, an electronic book that must be read independently by the students without the presence or assistance of an instructor. Therefore, the content must be presented to the students in such a way as to promote comprehension and retention of the material.

Standard 10.2 – Minimum Initial Study Time

10.2.1 - Online courses must be organized such that the minimum time for the course content to be completed by the student is at least three (3) hours. Course content is defined as that material meeting the National Boating Education Standards 1-8, not including the chapter quizzes, practice quizzes/exams or the final exam.

10.2.2 - Each page of the course content will have a minimum time that a student is required to remain on that page (“credited time”) which the course provider will set when the online course is presented for review and will retain through the approved period. The sum of the credited times over all content pages will equal or exceed three (3) hours. The student may not progress to the next page until the credited time has expired, however, students may stay on a page longer than the credited time. Additional time required to re-study the materials if a student fails a quiz or the exam does not count as part of the credited time.

10.2.3 – If a student exits or logs off a page before completing its credited time, he/she will be required to complete the remaining time on that page when he/she returns before progressing to the next page.

Rationale – Simply following through the minimum content necessary to meet the standards should take a minimum of three (3) hours. This provides the opportunity for the individual to absorb the information and discourages by-passing material or skipping to the final exam. In reality, a student can be expected to spend longer than 3 hours, and more typically, 6 – 8 hours as consistent with classroom courses.

Standard 10.3 – Online Testing Requirements

Students must proceed through all of the credited time course content pages in each chapter prior to taking each chapter’s review quiz. Once a student has successfully passed a chapter review quiz, the content pages for that chapter will be available for additional review by the student at any time with no time requirements. Content pages must not be made available to the student via any means while the student is taking a chapter quiz or final exam.

Standard 10.3.1 - The aggregate number of questions for the chapter quizzes must be at least fifty (50) and all questions must be written according to the NASBLA test-writing standards. Chapter quizzes must adhere to the same Terms and Conditions “Testing” requirements as for final exams. In addition, no two questions on a given quiz may be the same and none of the quiz questions can be used for that student’s final exam.

Standard 10.3.2 – All quizzes, final exams and other assessments, if given online, will be graded automatically and the student shall be provided with his/her score online.

Standard 10.3.3 – A quiz or exam feedback will be generated and presented to the student upon completion of each chapter quiz, final exam or any other assessment. If feedback is given after answering each quiz question, no feedback will be given until an

answer has been submitted. Once an answer is submitted, it can not be changed by the student.

Standard 10.3.4 – Students must score at least seventy percent (70%) on each chapter review quiz before progressing to the next chapter. Students who score below this threshold will be required to study the entire chapter content pages again, once again meeting the initial credited time for each page, and may not retake the quiz until they have repeated that chapter.

Standard 10.3.5 – The passing score for the final exam will be left up to the individual states, however, if a student fails the final exam, the student may retake the exam up to two (2) times without waiting. Upon the third failure, the student will be required to start the course again satisfying all course requirements including the initial credited time, chapter quizzes, and final exam.

Standard 10.3.6 – If a student leaves a chapter quiz, final exam or any other assessment without completing it; the course must be designed to give the student the option of returning to continue taking the assessment at the point in which he/she stopped or of treating the abandonment as a failing score.

Rationale – The testing requirements shown here are in addition to those found in Standard 9, which outline the testing requirements for all types of courses. Unlike a classroom course, the chapter quizzes and final exam are the only form of assessment available for online courses. Therefore, it is imperative that the online testing requirements be established and regulated. The feedback should be designed to encourage students to review the course content rather than to memorize test questions.

Standard 10.4 – Registration

Students must enter and will not be allowed to change student-entered data, including their name, birth date, or the state for which they are seeking to obtain certification, after beginning the course.

Rationale – Online courses need to be designed to limit the ability for one person to take the online course and another person to be issued the same certificate.