



CENTER FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION TEMPLATE AGREEMENT

A goal of MS State Online (Center for Distance Education) is to foster the best online teaching and learning experience for students and faculty. The instructional design staff at Mississippi State University is committed to assisting faculty and departments in creating high-quality online courses that are pedagogically sound and aesthetically appealing. One method of upholding that commitment is through the creation of custom departmental templates that can be deployed in Mississippi State University Canvas courses taught through campus 5. This agreement was developed as a means of improving the template adoption and design process for faculty and our design staff.

In order to facilitate successful adoption and design of a course template, our instructional design staff are committed to working with faculty in a multi-step process to design, train, deploy, and troubleshoot the template with the goal of moving entire departments into a template that enhances the online experience for all users.

Template Design Requirements:

- 1 All templates designed and deployed by MS State Online are
 - a. aligned with **Quality Matters standards**
 - b. aligned with current research in online education and online best practices
 - c. designed to meet **AA or AAA accessibility standards**
- 2 Graphics used in templates may not be previously copyrighted
 - a. MS State Online logo will be displayed in the course and may not be removed
- 3 Templates may be used in conjunction with Mississippi State University courses and may not be shared or used outside the university.
 - a. MS State Online design staff place copyrights for usage on templates before deployment

Faculty Expectations:

- 1 There will be a dedicated contact(s) within the department
- 2 **Faculty will meet all discussed deadlines**
 - a. Timeframes and deadlines will be mutually agreed upon by faculty and design staff
- 3 Faculty will work with design staff by providing ideas and advice for elements within the template that will suit the needs of their courses and department
- 4 Faculty using the template will be **trained by MS State Online design staff** in how to use the template before the template is released to the department
 - a. Training mode and time will be mutually agreed upon by faculty and design staff

Design Staff Expectations:

- 1 There will be a dedicated contact within MS State Online

2 Design staff will meet all discussed deadlines

a. Timeframes and deadlines will be mutually agreed upon by faculty and design staff

3 Design staff will provide faculty with all tools and resources needed to make design decisions in a timely manner

a. Design staff will balance the needs and desires of the faculty while following QM standards, accessibility standards, and online best practices

4 Design staff will be available to assist faculty before, during, and after the design process and as a steady resource once the template has been deployed

- a. Continued support will be offered in a variety of modalities
- b. A new design staff contact may be utilized

A course template designed by MS State Online is a substantial commitment in time, resources, and creativity that are completed in the order requests are received. At this time, if a template is delayed due to inactivity on the part of the faculty, the template will be moved to the end of the queue and assessed again when it returns to the head of the queue. Faculty may ask for their template to be removed from the queue at any point in time and reinserted at a later date.

Once a template has reached a specific point in the design process, it may not be overhauled. If faculty are unsatisfied with the designs, they may cancel their current template request and apply again for a new place in the template queue.

Templates are designed to reflect QM standards and online best practices; design staff reserve the right to reject edits to the template that disregard those reflections. Templates are designed to meet the legal accessibility requirements for online courses; MS State Online cannot be held responsible for changes made to the template by faculty after deployment that alter the level of accessibility; the responsibility to maintain template standards within active courses belongs to faculty teaching those courses.

Date of Agreement: _____
(MM/DD/YY)

Faculty Contact(s): _____

MS State Online Design Staff: _____

