STANDARDS OR BEST PRACTICES FOR ONLINE TEACHING:

Following a comprehensive review, Baldwin et al (2018) described the following best practices for teaching online:

- Objectives are available - and made clear in course outlines, assignments, and for each class

- Navigation is intuitive - students can work logically and progressively through materials

- Technology promotes learner engagement/facilitates learning - versus drives the type of content delivered

- Student-to-student interaction is supported - and emphasized whether in partner or group discussions, group projects, etc.

- Instructor contact information and availability for student hours (a.k.a. office hours) is stated - clearly on the course outline and in the Learning Management System (i.e., Moodle)

- Communication and learning activities are used to build community - with concerted efforts regarding diversity and inclusion

- Expectations regarding quality and quantity of communication/participation are provided - for in-class or breakout discussions and for discussion boards, using rubrics to provide clarification and clear expectations

- Assessment rubrics for assignments, including discussion boards, are provided - and followed

- Assessments align with learning objectives - and are clearly explained to students verbally (perhaps in video format too) and in writing

- Links to institutional services are provided - regarding accessible learning, mental health, student success, tutoring, etc.

- Course includes accommodations for disabilities - following the Universal Design for Learning

- Course policies are stated for behavioural expectations - including related to academic integrity, accomodations, copyright, etc.

TEACHING & LEARNING CENTRE
St. Francis Xavier University

Resource
Baldwin, S., Ching, Y., & Hsu, Y. (2017). Online Course Design in Higher Education: A Review of National and Statewide Evaluation Instruments. TechTrends, 62(1), 46-57. doi:10.1007/s11528-017-0215-z