



Course Design Worksheets

Select a course to work on during this workshop.

Course:

Stage 1
Identify
desired results

Beginning with the end in mind...

Describe the ways you would like your students to be different upon completing your course.
"A year (or more) after this course is over, I want and hope that students will _____."

Student Learning Goals & Objectives: Brainstorm Activity

Identify key attributes (knowledge, skills, values) a student should have upon completing your course. List these attributes in the columns below.

What should your students know, do, and/or care about?

<p>Knowledge</p>  <p>Head</p>	<p>Skills</p>  <p>Hand</p>	<p>Values</p>  <p>Heart</p>

Establishing Course Goals & Objectives:

Based on your brainstorm, develop course goals and objectives

- Knowledge outcomes (*e.g., disciplinary content*)
- Skills outcomes (*e.g., critical thinking; oral & written communication*)
- Values outcomes (*e.g., life-long learning, cultural awareness*)

Write 2 to 3 course goals, and 2 to 3 learning objectives that focus on student performance/product/level of attainment with consideration of the domains of learning – Bloom’s Taxonomy & relevant verbs.

Note: aim for your course objectives to be S.M.A.R.T (Specific – Measureable – Attainable – Relevant – Timely)

Course Goal:	Learning Objectives:
<i>describe the purpose of the course – what you want students to learn – expressed in general terms. Goal statements are broad and abstract.</i>	<i>describe specific learning behaviors that students should exhibit in the context of the course. Objectives transform goal generalizations into specific student performance that demonstrate student learning and skill development.</i>

GENERAL



SPECIFIC & MEASURABLE

Examples:

Course Goal:

Learning Objective(s):

<p>This course is intended to equip students with skills needed to locate, gather, and use information intellectually and responsibly.</p>	<p><i>By the end of this course, students should be able to accomplish the following:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate the ability to locate and gather information through libraries, the world wide web, and "field" research methods, such as interviews and surveys; 2. Evaluate the sources of information; 3. Analyze, summarize, and synthesize information from diverse sources; 4. Apply information gained through research to a given situation; 5. Appropriately cite sources of information.
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Adapted from: the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, COURSE-Based Review and Assessment, OAPA Handbook
http://www.umass.edu/oapa/oapa/publications/online_handbooks/course_based.pdf

Arreola, R.A. (1998) *Writing Learning Objectives: A Teaching Resource Document*, The University of Tennessee.
http://www.uwo.ca/tsc/graduate_student_programs/pdf/LearningObjectivesArreola.pdf

My Course Goals(s) and Objectives

Course Goal(s)	Learning Objective(s) <i>By the end of this course, students will be able to...</i>
1)	
2)	
3)	

Reviewing your goals and objectives:

Re-read your course goals and objectives with consideration to the checklist below. Revise your course goals and objectives when the criteria are not met.

<u>Course Goals:</u>	<u>Learning Objectives:</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Does the course goal have at least one learning objective?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the learning objective stem from a course goal?
<input type="checkbox"/> Does the course goal use broad language and verbs like “know” or “understand”?	<input type="checkbox"/> Is the learning objective measurable?
<input type="checkbox"/> Is the course goal student-centered?	<input type="checkbox"/> Is the learning objective written in terms of observable, behavioral outcomes?
<input type="checkbox"/> Do your course goals reflect your essential questions and the enduring understandings for your course?	<input type="checkbox"/> Is the learning objective student-centered?
<input type="checkbox"/> Do the course goals encompass a range of educational outcomes?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the learning objective target one specific aspect of expected performance?
<input type="checkbox"/> Are there an appropriate amount of course goals?	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the learning objective utilize an effective, action verb that targets the desired level of performance?
	<input type="checkbox"/> Do learning objectives measure a range of educational outcomes?
	<input type="checkbox"/> Does the learning objective match instructional activities and assessments?

Adapted from: Mandernach, B. J. (2003). *Writing Quality Learning Objectives*. Retrieved 28 March 2011, from *Park University Faculty Development Quick Tips*.

Learning Context / Situational Factors:

Answer the questions below. Comment both on the **challenges** and on the **opportunities** to posed by each factor in designing your course.

1. Specific Context of the Teaching/Learning Situation

How many students will be enrolled in the class? How long and frequent are the class meetings? What type of course is it? How will the course be delivered: in a classroom, lab, or online? What physical elements of the learning environment will affect the class? Does your course serve as a prerequisite for a subsequent course?

2. General Context of the Learning Situation

What learning expectations are placed on this course or curriculum by: the institute, department? the profession? employers?

3. Nature of Your Subject

Is this subject primarily theoretical, practical, or a combination? Are there important changes or controversies occurring within the field? In what way might your students use what they have learned in your course in the future? What learning support would be appropriate for your students in this course?

4. Characteristics of the Learners: Who are your students?

What is the demography of students in your course in terms of age, race, gender, and ethnicity? What is the life situation of the learners? What prior knowledge, skills, experiences, initial feelings, and misconceptions do students usually have about this subject? What are the students' learning goals, expectations, and preferred learning styles? What percentage of students in your course will have access to technology? And tech support?

5. Characteristics of the Teacher

What beliefs and values do you have about teaching and learning? What is your comfort/familiarity with the subject? What are your strengths in teaching this course?

Adapted from: an On-line Course Design Tutorial developed by Dr. Barbara J. Tewksbury and Dr. R. Heather MacDonald as part of the program On the Cutting Edge (<http://serc.carleton.edu/NAGTWorkshops/>), funded by NSF grant DUE-0127310; and Situational Factors worksheet in *A Self-Directed Guide to Designing Courses for Significant Learning* (Fink, 2003).

Stage 2
Determine
acceptable
evidence

Assessing Student Learning

What type of evidence do you need to know your students are achieving your goals/objectives?

What type of assessment methods would be appropriate?

(*e.g.*, ongoing formative checks for understanding, observation, discussion, quizzes, tests, problem-sets, reflective essay, projects, etc.). Consider scope: simple – complex; and time frame: short- to long-term.

Authentic Assessments

Encourage students to transfer ideas, knowledge, skills to a variety of contexts as they would in the workplace, civic life, and personal life.

Consider having your students engage in a task, problem, or project that:

- Simulates the ways knowledge and abilities are used in real-world situations
- Asks students to “do” the subject – students simulate the work done in the profession
- Encourages students to integrate knowledge and skills in addressing a task
- Provides opportunities for feedback and formative improvement

What authentic task(s) would be appropriate for your course?

Assignment Design

*Think of an assignment that would meet your course goal(s)/objective(s).
Draft the prompt that you would use to describe the assignment to your students.*

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Sample assignment cues:

Analyze:	Take apart and look at something closely. Then, support your divisions of the subject matter.
Chart:	Present an outline or show a sequence of how or why something occurs or happened. Support your cause and effect claims.
Evaluate:	Make a value judgment according to some criteria. If criteria are not given, then clarify criteria with teacher. Support your judgment.
Explain:	Clarify or interpret how something works or happens. If you are interpreting, you will need to support your interpretation. The assignment, however, may be asking you to simply chronicle how something works or acts.
Justify:	Argue in support of something; to find positive reasons for its existence. Support your argument.
Prove:	Demonstrate correctness by use of logic, fact, or example. Support your claims.

Source: UCAT – University Center for the Advancement of Teaching, The Ohio State University.

Criteria and Rubrics

- What characteristics in student work (responses, products, or performances) should you examine to determine the extent to which the desired results were achieved?
- How should the different levels of quality, proficiency, or understanding be described and distinguished from one another?

Primary Trait Analysis (PTA) is a way for you to specify the exact criteria against which student work will be judged. PTA is a rubric scale that communicates to students exactly what is expected of them on an assignment and what they must do to achieve a certain grade.

Steps for Constructing a Full Rubric / PTA

1. Choose a test or assignment that tests what you want to evaluate. Make clear your objectives for the assignment – what you want students to learn and do.
2. **Identify the criteria**, or “traits,” that will count in the evaluation. These are nouns or noun phrases, such as “thesis,” “eye contact with client,” “use of color,” or “control of variables.”
3. **Construct a two- to five-point scale** that will be used for each trait (*e.g.*, for the trait “thesis” the scale will have several levels, each with a description. A thesis that scores a 5 does X, Y, and Z. A thesis that scores a 4 does X and Y. And so on.
4. **Evaluate student work against the scale.** Try out the scale with a sample of student work or review with colleagues and revise.

Source: Walvoord, B.E. and Anderson, V.J. (2010). Chapter 4. Establishing Grading Criteria and Standards for Grading. In *Effective Grading: A Tool for Learning and Assessment in College. Second Edition*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

	Excellent	Acceptable	Unacceptable
<i>Trait # 1</i>			
<i>Trait # 2</i>			
<i>Trait # 3</i>			
<i>Trait # 4</i>			

Mapping the Journey of Your Course: Creating Your Course Skeleton

Post-it mapping activity – Course Content and “Non-Content” Concept Map

Adapted from Saroyan, A. and Amundsen, C. (2004). *Rethinking Teaching in Higher Education: from a course design workshop to a faculty development framework*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 45 – 46.

Thinking about your course:

- 1) Write down everything that comes to mind that you consider important

Content essential to my course:

- 2) Review what you wrote above and try to reduce the number of ideas or concepts by circling those you consider most important.
- 3) Write each of the circled concepts on a Post-it note.
- 4) Sort the Post-it notes into meaningful clusters or groupings.
- 5) Label each cluster and write the labels on a Post-it note. These labels will probably reflect the key concepts you will use in your map, but this may change.
- 6) Arrange these labels (key concepts) in a way that is meaningful to you on a file folder.
- 7) Highlight the relationships among concepts – e.g., use lines to connect one or more concepts, and label the lines to describe the relationship.

Organizing course content:

- How can your course structure support the learning objectives you identified?
- What organization schema is most appropriate? (*e.g.*, chronological; simple to complex; theory to application; concept sequence; “real world” sequence; around disciplinary questions; problem-centered; macro to micro)

“Non-content” content* essential to my course:

*the “non-content” content of your course, *e.g.*: communication skills, rhetorical skills, collaborative skills, technological skills, visual literacy, quantitative reasoning, research skills, analytical skills, critical thinking; problem-solving skills, creativity, ethical skills, information literacy.

Planning for a semester – scheduling assignments/activities:

- Should your learning objectives be scaffolded (*i.e.*, do certain ones need to come before others)?
- What kind of assignment, activity, or assessment might work best to help students accomplish each learning objective?
- Do certain learning objectives repeat in multiple weeks (*i.e.*, as students work on a large paper assignment)?
- How can you scaffold assignments to help students develop skills over time through practice, receiving feedback, and conducting self-assessments?

Week	Learning Objective(s) addressed	Skills*	Assignment/Activity
1			
2			
3			
4			
...			

Stage 3
 Plan learning
 experiences &
 instruction

Teaching / Learning Activities

Questions on Teaching Methods:

- What teaching methods would model the thinking and processing that you want your students to do?

- What type of classroom activities would engage your students?

Fink's "Castle Top" template for creating an instructional strategy

Sketch out a sequence of in-class and out-of-class activities using the learning activities you identified. In place of the question marks, enter the learning activity you propose for each block of time. The goal is to create a sequence of activities that build on each other.

Sequencing learning activities by Major Topic

Major topic in course: _____	<i>In-class</i> Activities	?		?	
	<i>Out-of-Class</i> Activities		?		?

Sequencing learning activities by Sessions per Week

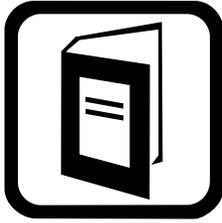
Week	Class	<i>Between</i>	Class	<i>Between</i>	Class
1					
2					
...					
15					

Source: Fink, L. Dee. (2003) *Creating Significant Learning Experiences*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Integrated Course Map

Week	Learning Objectives	Content	Non-content content/skills	Activities/ teaching methods	Assignments/ Assessments
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					

Source: Center for Teaching Excellence, Suffolk University.



Recommended Resources

Course Design frameworks :

Fink, D. L. (2003). *Creating Significant Learning Experiences: An Integrated Approach to Designing College Courses*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Fink, D. L. (2005). A Self-Directed Guide to Designing Courses for Significant Learning: <http://www.deefinkandassociates.com/GuidetoCourseDesignAug05.pdf>
Based on *Creating Significant Learning Experiences: An Integrated Approach to Designing College Courses* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2003).

Wiggins, G. and McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by Design*. Expanded Second Edition. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development (ASCD).

Assessment of Student Learning:

Angelo, T.A. and Cross, K.P. (1993). *Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers*. Second Edition. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Dannelle, D.S. and Levi, A.J. (2005). *Introduction to Rubrics: An Assessment Tool to Save Grading Time, Convey Effective Feedback and Promote Student Learning*. Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Walvoord, B.E. and Anderson, V.J. (2010). *Effective Grading: A Tool for Learning and Assessment in College*. Second Edition. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Student Engagement:

Barkley, E.F. (2010). *Student Engagement Techniques: A Handbook for College Faculty*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Bean, J.C. (2011). *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrative Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom*. Second Edition. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.