

Mapping Assessment to the Curriculum

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Workshop Objectives

- Understand the concept and benefits of course and curriculum alignment
- Understand how a curriculum map shows the relationship of courses to the curriculum
- Learn the process to develop a Curriculum Map in your program
- Discuss issues of design and use



What are the Benefits?

- Helps “see” the whole curriculum at a glance.
- Helps understand why outcomes are or are not being achieved.
- Facilitates faculty discussion and understanding of the curriculum.
- A guide to help “align” the curriculum.



Course and Curriculum Alignment



What is a Curriculum Map?

A graphical portrayal of the relationships among the program curriculum (courses) and intended program outcomes.



PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

REQUIRED COURSES	How Outcomes are Addressed and Assessed	Outcome #1 Understand major theories in developmental psychology	Outcome #2 Understand major theories in behavior psychology	Outcome #3 Understand major theories in social psychology	Outcome #4 Write well reasoned and data supported papers using proper APA format.	Outcome #5 Understand basic research designs and statistics in developmental, behavioral and social psychology.
Psych 101: Introduction to Psychology	Level:	Introduced	Introduced	Introduced	Introduced	Not Addressed
	Emphasis	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	
	Assessed:	Exams	Exams	Exams	Not Assessed	
Psych 102: Foundations of Modern Psychology	Level:	Introduced	Introduced	Introduced	Introduced	Introduced
	Emphasis	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Little/None
	Assessed:	Exams	Exams	Exams	Paper	Not Assessed
Psych 201: History of Psychology	Level:	Introduced	Introduced	Introduced	Reinforced	Not Addressed
	Emphasis	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	
	Assessed:	Exams	Exams	Exams	Paper	
Psych 202: Comparative Psychology	Level:	Introduced	Introduced	Introduced	Reinforced	Introduced
	Emphasis	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Little/None
	Assessed:	Exams	Exams	Exams	Paper	Not Assessed
Psych 301: Introduction to Behavioral Psychology	Level:	Not Addressed	Reinforced	Not Addressed	Reinforced	Reinforced
	Emphasis		Extensive		Moderate	Moderate
	Assessed:		Exams, Paper		Project	Not Assessed

What The Map Shows

- The map enables a course-by-course analysis by showing the relationships between **course-level objectives** and **program-level outcomes**:
 - Where they coincide;
 - How they relate;
 - If and how they are assessed.



Map the Curriculum Course by Course

Program: **Alternative Arts and Sciences - BS**

Level / Emphasis / Assessment

Outcomes → Courses ↓	Students can tell the future	Students can read minds
Palm Reading 102	Introduce concepts Moderate Not Assessed	Introduce skills/concepts Moderate <i>What's My Sign Test</i>
Crystal Ball Analysis 480	Advanced Extensive <i>The Madam Celeste Simulation</i>	Reinforce concepts Moderate <i>Student Clairvoyance Assessment Method (SCAM)</i>

Before You Begin . . .

- Prerequisites:
 - Someone to facilitate and coordinate the process;
 - Willingness of faculty to participate;
 - Major courses have learning objectives;
 - Program outcomes are established.



Program Learning Outcomes

Example

Masters in Atmospheric Science


1. Understanding of the theoretical basis and observational methods for study of atmospheric physics, air chemistry, hydrometeorological and climate-scale processes in the Earth's atmosphere.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.



Actual Program Outcome!

Assessment Plan

(where outcomes are born)

- Program Mission
- Student Learning Outcomes (3-5 recommended)
 - Performance Indicators  Assessment Measures
- Use of Results
- Implementation Plan

Build Your Curriculum Map

What ?

- Gather information about the curriculum
- Organize and display course information
- Create a draft **CM** to share with faculty
- Verify the draft **CM** information

How ?

- Instructors complete **Course Worksheets**
- Combine on **CM Worksheet**
- Use **CM Worksheet** (Consider **color coding**)
- Share and discuss with faculty – modify as needed



Using the Curriculum Map Prior to Program Assessment

Distribute the CM and assessment data to faculty for review, discussion and action

Reviewing the Curriculum Map helps faculty consider:

- Does this curriculum make sense?
 - Do we have the right program outcomes?
 - Are they supported by our courses?
- How will we know if the curriculum works as planned?
 - What are the “benchmarks” we should monitor?
 - Are there existing assessments we can use?



Using the Curriculum Map With Program Assessment Data

Distribute the CM and assessment data to faculty for review, discussion and action

The Curriculum Map is a useful tool to begin a faculty discussion of why assessed student performance met, exceeded or fell short of expectations for one or more program-level student learning outcomes.



Using Curriculum Mapping

How two UNR programs have adapted Curriculum Mapping to work for them.



Curriculum Mapping for Course Realignment

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Preparing our Course Map

- Started by crossing our Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) under HDFS Departmental Mission for each course
- Additional ratings were conducted:
 - Level of instruction, degree of presentation, Bloom's levels, and products
- Then each of the courses were combined onto grid



Our Department Course Grid

- Each of the courses tapping each of the departmental mission goals were ordered under columns
- Color coded for level of instruction
- Courses examined in light of levels of instruction with an eye to overlap



Next Steps

- Met as a Teaching Faculty with Dept. Chair and went over grids
- Course information was clarified with instructor present
- Several courses were deemed as not serving student interests in light of mission, thus were reconfigured
- Content instruction level was changed in some courses
- Agreed to try new configuration and monitor
- Minutes used for assessment indicating improvement of course structure for our assessment reports
- Meeting minutes will be used as assessment evidence for accreditation



Challenges

- Getting down to decisions about what to do with overlapping courses
- Course ownership issues became a challenge
- Getting forms completed
- Could be confusing at times when trying to do a number of courses quickly
- If your Departmental Mission goals are not specific enough, it could be problematic



Our Possible Solutions

- Still ongoing—some issues are harder to deal with (restructuring level/intensity of instruction)
- Discussing purpose and value of approach for assessment with faculty
- Documenting assessment process for Dean
- Turning the process into topic of publications, trainings, talks
- Turning to grid focuses on courses, not personalized to instructors



Recommendations for Administrators and Faculty

- Needs to be a faculty-initiated process
- Start early and document the progress through regular Resident Instructional meetings
- Incentives may help get the process underway
- Share results with higher administration, University Assessment Office
- Get word out through newsletters, spotlights
- Present findings, where applicable, at national conferences (Teaching Conferences)



Another Use of CM . . .

Briefly

- Used CM process for a Program of Merit designation by AGHE for UNR's Gerontology Certificate Program
- Mapped SLOs from certificate course syllabi onto Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs) required by accreditation body
- Then slotted our courses under our Certificate Program Goals as crossed with AGHE's SLO mandates
- Same level of mapping (e.g., products)
- AGHE indicated they have never seen the CMs in an application and appreciated the clarity, brevity



Curriculum Mapping at the UNR School of Social Work



- “It is unlikely that you will get the curriculum map right the first time (Harden, 2001).”



History of CM at UNR SW

Addressed two main issues:

- 1) Pressures for outcome evaluation for re-accreditation and UNR Assessment Office. Prior assessment tools emphasized process evaluation.
- 2) Need for systematic assessment of curriculum to determine where students were provided breadth & depth of material and where there was redundancy—or particular concern for LOAs and new faculty.



History continued

- Initially faculty members feared CM would be another time-consuming mechanical assessment tool.
- CM became more attractive as faculty perceived it as a tool that could achieve multiple purposes.



Goals of CM

- 1) Outcome assessment that would fulfill requirements of **Program Evaluation**.
- 2) Systematic information for **Instructors** about what material was taught in each class, and at what level of depth.
- 3) This information can be shared with **Community Stakeholders** (future employers)
- 4) and with **Students**.



Inductive Approach to CM

- In contrast to HDFS, SW began by assessing what was currently taught in each class in relation to the SLO established by our accrediting body.
- This approach fit the needs of the faculty.
“Start where the faculty is at.”



CM Instrument

- Learning objectives on the left-hand side of the CM. All student learning objectives were listed for each course.
- Bloom's taxonomy across the top to measure depth of processing



Student Input in CM

Recall the 3 perspectives of CM assessment:

- 1) Written (“fictional”) curriculum
- 2) Taught (teacher experience of what was taught)
- 3) Received (student experience of what was taught)



Administration of CM

- Instructors completed CM for each course they taught in the required CM curriculum.
- Students completed the same CM instrument for each applicable course.
- CM tools for both students and instructors were included with end of semester STE.
- The CM tools for students and instructors were identical.



Lessons Learned

- 1) CM is a process as well as an assessment tool.
 - CM is used to collect quantitative data but the communication that it elicits among faculty and students is equally beneficial.
 - CM highlights the conceptual underpinnings of a program. Reaching agreement and understanding of these goals and priorities is a lengthy and dynamic process.



Lessons Learned continued

- 2) Unanticipated value judgments were made about Bloom's taxonomy
 - Students gave high ratings on Bloom's taxonomy if they liked the instructor
 - Instructors wanted to be given high ratings on Bloom's taxonomy



Lessons Learned continued

- 3) Methodological problems call into question the validity of our CM data.
- Time administration of the CM tool so that students do not have assessment fatigue
 - Identify one individual to administer CM
 - Need clearer operationalization of Bloom's taxonomy
 - Limit learning objectives listed on each CM instrument to those we have empirically found addressed in each course.

