

# CURRICULUM MAPS

## UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND, OFFICE OF ASSESSMENT

A standard curriculum map uses a grid or table to align the curricular or co-curricular program learning outcomes with the courses or learning experiences. Maps vary widely in their design, but generally they either list the program learning outcomes along the top row, and the courses or learning experiences in descending order along the left-hand column, or vice versa.

### INTRODUCED, REINFORCED, AND OTHER MARKERS

Educators typically use a three-point scale to identify the courses or learning experiences where their curricular or co-curricular program introduces, reinforces, and expects student proficiency of each student learning outcome. Many versions of that three-point scale exist, such as:

- Introduced, Reinforced, Proficient
- Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced
- Beginning, Developing, Demonstrating
- Emerging, Practicing, Competent

Alternatively, educators use Bloom's taxonomy's lower- and higher-order verbs in their curriculum map's learning scale, such as remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create. Or, rather than a three-point scale, educators use a simple two-point scale that includes, for example, covered and assessed.

### "A" FOR ASSESSMENT

Assessment specialists also recommend adding an "A" to each point on the curriculum map where the curricular and co-curricular program will collect and analyze assessment data. Programs should consider collecting data at least once at each point in their scale, for example, when they introduce, reinforce, and expect student proficiency of each learning outcome.

### MAKE IT TRANSPARENT: AN EQUITY-MINDED PRACTICE

Curriculum maps provide a tool for faculty and professional staff to discuss and understand their role in contributing to the larger curricular, co-curricular, and general education programs. Designing, sharing, and annually reviewing the curriculum map with all of the program faculty and professional staff ensures that everyone teaches to, assesses, and provides data on the learning outcomes at their appropriately agreed upon level.

Likewise, equity-minded assessment scholars advise educators to share with students the times when the curricular and co-curricular program introduces, reinforces, and expects student proficiency of the learning outcome. Programs can also share the curriculum map with students. In other words, keep students at the center of conversations on curricular and co-curricular design, implementation, and learning.

## CURRICULUM MAP EXAMPLES

Curriculum maps range from simple to multifaceted, yet they share some characteristics.

- They include all of the courses and learning experiences that students can and need to earn a degree, from general education to electives to upper-level classes.
- They scaffold learning, ensuring that every program learning outcome gets introduced and reinforced, preferably several times before students are expected to show proficiency.
- They illustrate the ways in which the program learning outcomes, courses, and assessments fit together, relate to, and progress from one another.

<b>SAMPLE CURRICULUM MAP #1</b>			
<b>KEY: I = INTRODUCED, R = REINFORCED, P = PROFICIENT, A = ASSESSED</b>			
<b>Courses</b>	<b>Program LO #1: Communicate effectively in written form.</b>	<b>Program LO #2: Identify rhetorical devices within texts.</b>	<b>Program LO #3: Document sources with academic integrity.</b>
ENG 101	I, A	I, A	I, A
ENG 103	R	R	R
ENG 201	R	R	R
ENG 203	R	R	R
ENG 301	R, A	R, A	R, A
ENG 303	R	R	R
ENG 401	P	P	P
ENG 403	P, A	P, A	P, A

Curricular and co-curricular programs can also create columns on their curriculum map to identify each course's or learning experience's signature assignments as well as the specific assessments that the program or co-curricular unit will collect and analyze data on.

SAMPLE CURRICULUM MAP #2				
Courses	Program Learning Outcome #1		Program Learning Outcome #2	
	LEVEL	ASSESSMENT	LEVEL	ASSESSMENT
ENG 101	I, A	3-4-page written reflection on a personal challenge.	I, A	Short answer responses to a required text.
ENG 103	R	Weekly journal entries on the readings, collected, assessed, and calculated into the students' final grade.	R	Biweekly quizzes identifying rhetorical devices.
ENG 301	R, A	7-8-page comparative essay on the ways in which two authors use rhetorical devices.	R, A	7-8-page comparative essay on the ways in which two authors use rhetorical devices.
ENG 403	P, A	15-page capstone essay comparing the ways in which multiple authors use rhetorical devices	P, A	15-page capstone essay comparing the ways in which multiple authors use rhetorical devices

Including all of the courses in a curriculum map that students can and need to earn a degree helps programs see the areas where some of their learning outcomes might not get addressed. This way, programs might place stronger emphasis on those learning outcomes in their required courses, allowing students to get enough practice before they are expected to attain proficiency.

SAMPLE CURRICULUM MAP #3						
	Required Courses			Elective Courses		
Program LOs	BIO 101	BIO 103	ENG 101	ENG 103	PSC 103	HIS 103
Foundational Knowledge	I, A	R				
Academic Integrity	I, A	R	I	R	R	R
Communication	I, A	R	I	R	R	R

## SOURCES

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