

Curriculum Mapping for Course Realignment

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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.



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.




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.



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



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 dept 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)



Case study in mastering resistance

- Example of the process at work and what can be accomplished
- Problems with the practicum course
 - Student discontent
 - Identified as a problem in the department review
 - Frustration of some faculty, resistance by others



Curriculum Review

- Practicum course emerged as a sacred cow, dividing faculty
- False starts, cancelled meetings, and decisions overturned from one meeting to the next
- Course ownership led to rationalization, defensiveness, and coalitions
- We were getting nowhere



Had to start over...

- Asked two questions...
 - What is the purpose of the course in the context of our program assessment outcomes
 - What is the best way to achieve the goals of the course
- Full and easy agreement on what students needed to learn in the practicum
 - Observation skills
 - Tolerance for diversity
 - Collaboration and teamwork
 - Using common sense
 - Interacting appropriately with others
- Checked to see we were already teaching these skills in other courses...no!



Finally zeroed in on problems with the course...

- Main issue...practicum did not prepare students for senior level courses
- Further identified the main goals of the course...
 - Teach students to suspend their own values and objectively interpret human behavior
 - Provide experiences in observing and interpreting behavior in a variety of contexts
 - Engage students in an outreach experiences
 - Provide students with opportunities that promote teamwork and collaboration



The solution...

- Students need a consistent way to process their interpretations after an observation under the supervision of one instructor
- Solution proposed...
 - WebCT course with streaming video and workbook
 - Allows students to observe a standardized set of materials
 - Consistent content and process, no matter who teaches the course
 - Less resource intensive than current field experiences
 - Videos used to model appropriate observational skills
 - Can be set up as a sequenced set of learning modules
 - Mastery in one module would be required before moving on to the next
 - Buy-in from EVERY member of the faculty!



What was accomplished...

- The curriculum review process was a tool that helped us get unstuck...
 - Resistance to the curriculum mapping process ...perceived as a waste of time
 - Resistance to changing the practicum... it just needed tweaking;
 - By focusing on the goals of the practicum in the context of program outcomes, we all got on the same page
 - Rapid agreement on what we wanted
 - Deeper thinking about specific objectives for the course
 - Once we got to this point, the solution was easy and faculty were energized by the process
- Total faculty buy in
 - Some agreed to write an IEG proposal to support the effort
 - Others agreed to work on developing the course content
 - A third group agreed to work on the web development and technology
- We moved from years of procrastination to a creative and exciting solution in just a few meetings

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

