

Curriculum Development Through Engaging Faculty

2014 Assessment Leadership Summer Institute

Design Backward 1

1. What is worthy and requiring of learning?

2. What is evidence of learning?

3. What promotes learning, interest, and excellence?

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Design Backward 2

1. Goals/Outcomes/Objectives

2. Performance Tasks → Assessment Tasks

3. Learning Activities

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Resources

- Principles of Backward Design by Tasmanian Department of Education
http://www.wku.edu/library/dlps/infolit/documents/designing_lesson_plans_using_backward_design.pdf
- Clementi, Donna. (2012). Pathways to Excellence: Using Backward Design Principles for Instruction and Assessment. <http://vimeo.com/55120112>

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Metaphor Activity

Pick an image that resembles your current curriculum:

Our current curriculum is like [image] because _____

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Facilitation Activity

Goal: Create a shared vision and list of things to improve

Use a picture to represent your vision:

Our ideal curriculum is like [image] because _____

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Small Levers

Small changes can have a great effect on student experience, in fact, “rather than seeking large levers to pull in order to promote change on a large scale, it may well be more effective to **pull more small levers more often**” (Pascarella & Terenzini, *How College Affects Students*, p. 665)

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Making Metaphors Activity

Overview of Activity

1. Complete the metaphor stem by selecting one picture and filling in the blank.

Stem: The ideal curriculum is like [image] because students _____.

Other stem ideas:

A successful degree program is like a _____ because _____.

Implementing assessment is like a _____ because _____.

Program changes feel like _____ when _____.

Pitfalls while conducting assessment are like _____ because _____.

Faculty commitment to use assessment results occurs when _____ because _____.

Conflict in program decision making is like a _____ because _____.

2. Share the metaphor [recorder records responses].
3. Identify patterns, similar qualities, and/or unique outliers across the metaphor responses.
4. Discuss new insights revealed and their relevance to or implications for the program.

Activity goal: Create a shared vision for the curriculum and list of things to improve the curriculum.

Note. Small changes can have a great effect on the student experience, in fact, "rather than seeking large levers to pull in order to promote change on a large scale, it may well be more effective to pull more small levers more often" (Pascarella & Terenzini, *How College Affects Students*, p. 655)

Time:

:03 Welcome participants and describe the activity. Format :

"I'm glad to see you here today for the Assessment Committee meeting. Thank you for coming. We've focused on new course proposals lately and we haven't talked about the curriculum as a whole yet so sometimes it's not clear how the new courses fit our vision of the curriculum—or even whether we have a shared vision for our PhD curriculum.

I propose taking 20 minutes at the beginning of today's meeting for everyone to state their vision and then see how close we are. Any concerns?

As visual aids, I brought pictures. I would like you to fill-in-the blanks of this statement using a picture and an explanation.

Here's the fill-in-the-blank statement,

The ideal curriculum is like [image] because students _____.

Please choose a picture from the ones that I brought today. And then everyone will read their statement."

Facilitation tip. If someone does not want to use the pictures, they can fill in the blanks with words. E.g., John, "I really don't see the point in these pictures. What are we, kindergarteners?"

Facilitator: "Pictures make the abstract concrete and convey more than words in a shorter amount of time. I don't think anyone would mind if you use a short phrase instead of a picture."

:05 Individuals choose one picture from the table and prepare their statement. [It's best if they have to stand up and move to the table with the pictures.]

Facilitation tip: Have 10-15 more pictures than people. E.g., if there are 5 people, provide 15-20 pictures to choose from.

:05 Each person shares. Facilitator: "Please take 60 seconds to say how you filled in the blanks of the statement and we'll record explanations on the flip chart."

Facilitator records the gist of each person's statement. Alternative: there is another person who records.

Facilitation tip. When using a flip chart and markers, alternate between two different colored markers such as blue and green. Do not use red except as a highlight color.

Response 1 in blue

Response 2 in green

Response 3 in blue

Response 4 in green

:10 A) Facilitator asks the committee members to draw some conclusions, such as

"What patterns emerge?"

"Any similar qualities?"

"Any unique outliers?"

B) Facilitator crafts a draft shared vision statement on a flip chart/projector based on the conclusions.

C) Discussion on one or more questions such as these as time permits:

"Right now, how far are we from our ideal curriculum?"

"What can our committee do to improve the curriculum?"

"How might our shared vision affect the course approval process?"

:01 Facilitator wraps up the discussion: summarizes, praises accomplishments, and gives next steps.

"I've learned a lot in just 20 minutes and want to hear more, but that's all the time allotted for this today. We have a list of things that we agree on make up the ideal curriculum and decided that X and Y need work. I'll type up the notes and send them to you. We can use the list to help us review future proposals and decision making. I'll put X and Y on our next meeting agenda to see if we can develop ways to improve in that area. Thanks again. This has been very enlightening."

Idea for a follow-up meeting: rank order activity to prioritize a list of improvement suggestions.