



INTRODUCTION TO BACKWARDS DESIGN

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Pre-Institute Assessment: Curriculum Planning

- Complete the pre-institute assessment individually
- With members of your table group, discuss the answers to each of the questions
 1. What is a learning outcome?
 2. What types of assessments do you use in your courses? (provide examples or categories)
 3. What is your strategy/strategies for planning a course? (for example, what resources do you access? What/who do you consult?)
 4. Why do you want students to take away from your courses?
 5. Are you familiar with Understanding by Design/Backwards Planning?

Exploration Activity-UBD

- Each of the table groups need to come up with an idea for a family vacation.
 - Where is the family going?
 - For how long?
 - How are they getting there?
 - Where are they staying once they get there?
 - What's the purpose of the trip?
 - Who's going?



Discussion...

- What pieces/details of the family vacation did you have to figure out first?
 - Why did those parts have to get figured out first?
- What parts did you figure out next?
 - Why do you think those parts were figured out after the first ones?
- What other factors did you consider as your were planning the trip?

- How does this example relate to our teaching?
- How does it relate to UBD?

To begin with the end in mind means to start with a clear understanding of your destination. It means to know where you're going so that you better understand where you are now so that the steps you take are always in the right direction.

—Stephen R. Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, 1989, p. 98

So, What is UBD?

- Key Concepts that drive the planning framework
 - We are more likely to be goal focused and effective when we plan by design.
 - Long term goals are more likely reached through assessment and planned instruction.
 - There is more to assessment than just grading.
- Focus of design should be on curricular units rather than on individual lesson plans.
 - We ask ourselves:
 - What is the point of our course?
 - What needs to happen to support our long term instructional goals?
 - How do we establish desired outcomes and plan backward?



Backwards Design

- WHY?

- To eliminate instruction that is activity oriented or coverage oriented

- WHAT?

- Start with the end in mind and work backwards.
- Identify desired results
- Determine acceptable evidence
- Plan learning experiences/instruction

Primary Goals of UBD

- Student understanding
 - Making sense of the big ideas and the ability to transfer their learning
 - Goal is for students to be able to use the stuff, not just learn the stuff, we teach
- Evidence of student understanding
 - Transferring learning through authentic learning and performance

◦How do we make it more likely—by our design—that more students really understand what they are asked to learn?

Analyze the following example:

◦ In a course on writing, the following course competencies have been established:

- Analyze specific rhetorical contexts, including circumstance, purpose, topic, audience, and writer, as well as the writing's ethical, political, and cultural implications.
- Organize writing to support the central idea through unity, coherence, and logical development appropriate to a specific writing context.
- Use appropriate conventions in writing, including consistent voice, tone, diction, grammar, and mechanics.
- Summarize, paraphrase, and quote from sources to maintain academic integrity and to develop and support one's own ideas.
- Use feedback obtained from peer review, instructor comments, and/or other resources to revise writing.
- Assess one's own writing strengths and identify strategies for improvement through instructor conference, portfolio review, written evaluation, and/or other methods.
- Generate, format, and edit writing using appropriate technologies.

The course also had the following student learning outcomes, established by the professor:

In this class, you will learn how to:

- Achieve mastery of the writing process
- Achieve mastery of basic grammatical principles
- Improve critical thinking
- Improve communication skills
- Understand rhetorical styles (patterns of organization) used in writing
- Develop awareness of the "rhetorical situation"

Analyze how the calendar and course assignments match (or do not match) the competencies and outcomes for the course.

- Which assignments align to which objective or outcome?
- Which assignments don't seem to align at all?
- How do course activities relate to the assignments and/or course outcomes?
- Which course activities don't seem to relate to an assignment or course outcome?

Discussion

- What are you noticing about planning using UBD methods compared to how you plan your courses?
 - Googling other syllabi?
 - Teaching to the textbook?
- Why should professors “teach to the test” in their courses?
- How does UBD planning/design help students learn better and more effectively?
- How does UBD simplify your prepping for courses?
- How can an analysis of your own courses—similar to the analysis we just did—help your students to learn more effectively?

Next Steps

Ticket out the Door:

- What questions do you have about using UBD?
- What else do you need to know about UBD before you can start using it in the New Faculty Institute?

Register for the New Faculty Summer Institute!!!