

Curriculum Alignment

Curriculum addresses the “teach it” aspect of assessment, where specific opportunities are identified within the program where students will be exposed to the necessary materials to obtain the knowledge and skills associated with the goal and its associated learning outcome(s). Learning opportunities can include specific class assignments and assignments as well as any co-curricular activities. These opportunities are ideal assessment points within a program.

How do I communicate how the curriculum addresses the assessment of the program?

- Refrain from listing all courses required for the degree.
- Identify the learning opportunities that support the goals for the program.
- Include the course number and title.

Curricular opportunities can be expressed as a statement, such as in the example below:

“Students will gain the required computer skills in the program by completing CSCE 101 (Introduction to Computer Concepts).”

Another option for communicating how the program’s curriculum supports the goals for the program, is with a curriculum alignment matrix, also known as a curriculum map.

Curriculum Mapping

Curriculum maps are very helpful in demonstrating where in the program’s curriculum learning outcomes are being addressed. Mapping” program outcomes to course outcomes shows how students develop skills and knowledge in courses that are required for their programs of study.

How do I develop a basic curriculum map?

- Develop a table with two axes, one pertaining to program learning outcomes, the other to the learning opportunities
- Use appropriate program learning outcomes in the course assessment plan.
- Identify the connection between the learning outcomes and where students are exposed to the material.

Example of a basic curriculum map

Learning Outcomes	Course/Activity 1	Course/Activity 2	Course/Activity 3	Course/Activity 4	Course/Activity 5	Course/Activity 6
Outcome 1			X			
Outcome 2	X					
Outcome 3					X	
Outcome 4	X			X		
Outcome 5		X				X

If the program offers students repeated exposure to program learning outcomes in order to build on previous learning opportunities or, to reinforce learning over the course of the program, these can be expressed in the form of a complex curriculum map.

	Learning Outcome a	Learning Outcome b	Learning Outcome c	Learning Outcome d	Learning Outcome e
Course #1	L			L	
Course #2	M		L	M	
Course #3	M				L
Course #4		L	M		
Course #5		M		M	
Course #6	H	H			M
Course #7				H	H
Course #8			H		H

Note: L, M, and H describe the extent to which students experience the learning outcome. L = Low emphasis on the learning outcome; M = Moderate emphasis; H = High emphasis. Every course listed should contribute to at least one learning outcome.

Template for a complex curriculum map with program goals

	Introductory Course	Research Methods	Advanced Content Course A	Laboratory / Practicum Course	Advanced Content Course B	Advanced Content Course C	Advanced Content Course D	Capstone Course
Goal 1: Content								
SLO 1: Disciplinary knowledge base (models and theories)	Introduced		Reinforced		Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Mastery / Assessed
SLO 2: Disciplinary methods		Introduced		Reinforced		Reinforced		Mastery / Assessed
SLO 3: Disciplinary applications	Introduced		Reinforced		Reinforced		Reinforced	Mastery / Assessed
Goal 2: Critical Thinking								
SLO 4: Analysis and use of evidence		Introduced		Reinforced	Reinforced		Reinforced	Mastery / Assessed
SLO 5: Evaluation, selection, and use of sources of information	Introduced	Reinforced		Reinforced		Reinforced		Mastery / Assessed
Goal 3: Communication								
SLO 6: Written communication skills	Introduced	Reinforced		Reinforced		Reinforced		Mastery / Assessed
SLO 7: Oral communication skills		Introduced	Reinforced		Reinforced	Mastery / Assessed		
Goal 4: Integrity / Values								
SLO 8: Disciplinary ethical standards		Introduced		Reinforced	Reinforced			Mastery / Assessed
SLO 9: Academic integrity	Introduced	Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced		Reinforced		Mastery / Assessed

Sample Curriculum Map (Level of Skill) Updated: 24 January 2017

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<http://uwf.edu/cutla/>