How to Create a Curriculum Map

*Adapted from University of Northern Colorado, Office of Assessment*

*Steps to build a curriculum map (following along with Example 1):*

1. Place learning outcomes in matrix
   1. Collect existing learning outcomes (or if none exist, create new ones)
   2. Write each student learning outcome in a separate row in the table
2. Place courses and experiences in matrix –
   1. Identify the key/core courses and experiences that all students in your program should take. Write each course and experience in a separate column at the top of the matrix.
      1. Often (but not always) student learning and assessment occurs in courses. There are non-course experiences in a program curriculum in which students are also taught and assessed (ex. Presenting at a conference, participating in an internship, giving a music recital, etc.).
      2. If there are critical student experiences in which student learning and assessment occur, then these experiences can also be added to the matrix.
      3. It is recommended to create an initial curriculum map that only includes key/core courses and experience because these are the min places in which the teaching and assessment of student learning outcomes will occur.
      4. If elective courses or support courses (ex. Mason CORE courses) are critical to the program, then include these courses.
   2. If possible and available, collect the student learning outcomes for each course. The course-level learning outcomes can help determine when and to what extent the program-level learning outcomes are taught and assessed in individual courses.
3. Add key to indicate learning and assessment -
   1. Use a key to indicate the extent to which learning occurs in each class related to the learning outcomes and in which class the outcomes are assessed (Example 2a). Examples 2b-c provide examples of other common keys used in advanced curriculum maps
4. Analyze and modify –
   1. Analyze the curriculum map using the guiding questions in the next section.
   2. If necessary, modify the curriculum, student learning outcomes, assessment plan, approaches to teaching and learning in the program, etc. based on the analysis of the curriculum map.

Example 1a: Curriculum map with key showing extend to which learning occurs in courses, and in which courses outcomes are assessed

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| **Program Level Student Learning Outcomes** | **Program Courses/Milestones** | | | | | | |
| Course 100 | Course 201 | Course 301 | COURSE 310 | Course 320 | Course 330 | Senior Seminar |
| Critique human behavior and social structure from a sociological perspective | I | I | E | E | R | R | E/A |
| Analyze social issues using sociological theoretical perspectives | I | I | E | E |  |  | E/A |
| Apply research techniques in sociology-related project with real word implications |  | I |  |  | I | R | E/A |
| Communicate knowledge of sociology through written and oral work | I | I | E |  | R | E | E/A |
| KEY:  I – Concept related to learning outcomes introduced  E – Concept related to learning outcome emphasized  R – Concept related to learning outcome reinforced  A – Concept related to learning outcome assessed | | | | | | | |

Example 1c: Other Key Options:

* 1 – Some emphasis
* 2 – Moderate emphasis
* 3 – Significant emphasis
* 4 – Assessment occurs

Example 1b: Other Key Options:

* I – Introduced
* R – Reinforced, Opportunity to Practice
* M – Mastery at the senior level
* A – Assessment evidence collected

Example 2c: Other Key Options:

* 1 – Some emphasis
* 2 – Moderate emphasis
* 3 – Significant emphasis
* 4 – Assessment occurs

Analyzing a Curriculum Map

A curriculum map can be used to identify gaps between expected student learning outcomes and what is taught and assessed in a curriculum. A curriculum map can demonstrate if a course sequence effectively scaffolds and prepares students to achieve the learning outcomes.

Identification of gaps and issues in a curriculum map can lead to curricular changes to improve student learning opportunities. Below are questions that can guide analyses of, and discussion related to, curriculum maps:

1. Are all student learning outcomes taught, and taught with the appropriate sequence, in the curriculum?
2. Are all student learning outcomes assessed, and assessed at the appropriate time?
3. Do all core courses support the development of at least one student learning outcome?
4. Are there any core courses that don’t support the student learning outcomes?
5. Do the core courses sufficiently support the development of the student learning outcomes?
6. Is the sequence of how the learning outcomes are taught across the courses appropriate, and the most effective, at supporting students’ development of the learning outcomes?
7. What changes to courses, learning outcomes, sequence students take classes, and so on could improve the alignment between student learning outcomes and the curriculum?

Curriculum Map Worksheet

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|  | **Courses and Milestones** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| SLO1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| SLO2 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| SLO3 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| SLO4 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| SLO5 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| SLO6 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| SLO7 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| SLO8 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |