Curriculum Development in Education

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How Do We Define Curriculum?

- Curriculum is that which is taught at school.
- Curriculum is a set of subjects.
- Curriculum is content.
- Curriculum is a sequence of courses.
- Curriculum is a set of performance objectives.

How Do We Define Curriculum?

- Curriculum is all planned learning for which the school is responsible.
- Curriculum is all the experiences learners have under the guidance of the school.

John Delnay (1959.)

How Do We Define Curriculum?

- According to Bandi & Wales (2005), the most common definition derived from the word Latin root, which means “racecourse.”
- Bandi & Wales (2005) also stated that “ for many students, the school curriculum is a race to be run, a series of obstacles or hurdles (subjects) to be passed.”

What is Curriculum?

- A general definition of curriculum is offered by Print (1993: 9):
  - ...all the planned learning opportunities offered by the organisation to learners and the experiences learners encounter when the curriculum is implemented. This includes those activities that educators have devised for learners which are invariably represented in the form of a written document.

Curriculum & Syllabus

- Print also describes the difference between 'curriculum' and 'syllabus', which are often confused:
  - a syllabus forms part of the overall curriculum and tends to be a list of content areas which will be assessed.
- At a broad level, curriculum is determined by the educational institution. Some universities include in their curriculum certain units that all first-year undergraduate students must complete.

Some Issues to Consider

- What view of curriculum do I hold? What about my department, the faculty, the University? How is this reflected in the documents we produce describing the curriculum?

- How is the curriculum expressed in terms of what is taught, how it is taught, when it is taught, how it is assessed and how it is evaluated? To what extent does the intended curriculum reflect what is actually taught and learned?

- What might be positive and negative aspects of the 'hidden curriculum' in the units I teach?

4 CONCEPTIONS OF CURRICULUM

- The official curriculum
- The hidden curriculum
- The observed curriculum
- The curriculum-as-experienced

Pollard & Triggs (1997)

THE OFFICIAL CURRICULUM

- “A planned course of study”
- Explicitly stated programme of learning
- States intended curriculum content
- Structures sequence and progression, framing content and course activities
- Designed to challenge students and match learning needs

HIDDEN CURRICULUM

- All that is learnt during school/college activities that is not a designated part of official curriculum
- What is “picked up” about eg role of teacher/learner, status, attitudes to learning
- Implicit, embedded in taken-for-granted procedures and materials
- May be unrecognised and often examined
- Can have profound effect on self image on students, and attitudes to education/other social groups

OBSERVED CURRICULUM

- What can be seen as taking place in classroom
- May be different from intended official curriculum

CURRICULUM-AS-EXPERIENCED

- The parts of the curriculum (official and hidden) that actually connect meaningfully with students
- Arguably only this aspect which has educational impact – rest is often forgotten!

Models for Curriculum Design

Traditional Approach

- The teachers do curriculum planning with interesting activities and textbooks
- Teaching Methods are chosen as per contents.
- The teachers plan for assessment at the end of the unit.

Backward Process of Curriculum Designing (BCD)

- Described by Ralph Tyler about 50 years ago.
- The practice was revived by some educators in some countries in the late 90s.
- Is used in modern times very frequently in curriculum development.

To begin with the end in mind means…

- to start with a clear understanding

  of your destination.
- 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

  (Covey, 1994)

Effective Course Design

Effective course design includes the following key elements:

- (a) Determining what you want your students to learn and how you will measure what they are learning; and

- (b) Selecting a set of activities, assignments, and materials that will help you lead these students in their learning.

A Useful and Effective Syllabus …

- Requires reflection and analysis *before* instruction begins
- Provides a plan that conveys the logic and organization of the course;
- Includes content, process, and product goals
- Provides students with a way to assess the whole course its rationale, activities, policies, and scheduling
- Clarifies instructional priorities
- Is much more than a practical document, it has conceptual and philosophical components
- Serves as a ***contract for learning***

Instructional Design & Course Planning: A Systemic Approach

A systemic approach to course design and planning includes five (5) steps):

1. **Analyzing**:
   - The situational context of your course:
     - The conditions of your teaching situation
     - The characteristics of the students (both student organization and grouping)
     - The resources at your disposal
2. **Planning**:
   - The course syllabus
     - The student learning outcomes
     - The course content

Instructional Design & Course Planning
A Systemic Approach

3. **Conducting**:
   - Selecting appropriate and effective teaching methods
   - Ongoing classroom assessment of your students' learning

4. **Assessing:**
   1. The course at mid-term
   2. The course at the end of term

5. **Reflecting on your teaching**

Course design includes the following "Instructional Commonplaces"
- Learner
- Teacher
- Subject matter
- Social milieu (learning context)
- Evaluation

NO-1 Analyzing

Conditions of your teaching situation:

- What official need(s) is the course to fulfill? e.g.:
  - Meet the needs of the market?
  - Satisfy the requirements of a national accreditation organism?
  - Update old content and respond to important developments in a modern field?
- What is the course's scope within the general program of study? (How does your course begin? Why does it begin and end where it does?
- The requirements of subsequent courses

Analyzing (Cont'd)

The characteristics of your students:

- Diverse academic profiles? (the courses they have taken; the content and pedagogical organization of the previous courses)
- The degree of homogeneity of the enrolling students
- Do the students know each other, and have they worked together previously?

The resources at your disposal:

- Technological support [IT support] for web-based teaching, for multi-media instruction, or for distance learning?
- Departmental (or university) support for field trips or out of class activities?

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A systemic approach to course design and planning includes five (5) steps):

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2. Planning
3. Conducting
4. Assessing:
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No-2 Planning

Initial questions to ask when determining course content:

What are the core scholarly, or scientific, or field-specific findings and assumptions?

What are the main points of arguments? What are the key bodies of evidence?

What is the context of the course within the larger curriculum framework?

Planning (Cont'd)

(Initial questions to ask when determining course content:)

- Established course or new?
- Level of course (1st year? Graduate level?)
- Is the course required or elective?
- Based on textbook and/or course pack?
- Requires activities outside of class?

Planning: Course Content

- Be clear about what is most worth knowing (What do students *need* to know in order to derive *maximum* benefit from this educational experience?)
  - Describe the content that students will be required to know
  - Discuss the content that you will make available to support individual student inquiry or projects
  - Provide content that might be of interest to a student who wants to specialize in this area
- Decide what topics are appropriate to what types of student activities and assignments

Course Objectives: The Teaching Goals Inventory (TGI)

Includes considerations of six major components:

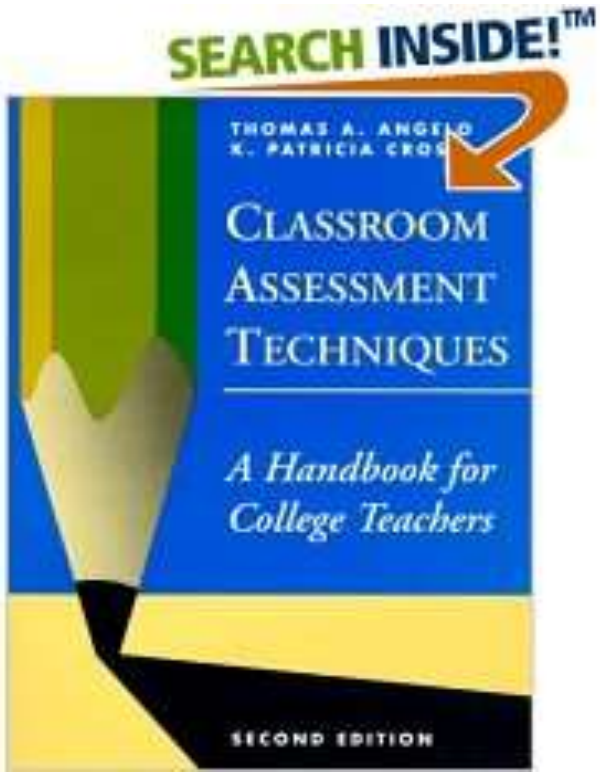
1. Higher order thinking skills
2. Basic academic success skills
3. Discipline-specific knowledge and skills
4. Liberal arts and academic values
5. Work and career preparation
6. Personal development

Course objectives:
The Teaching Goals Inventory (TGI)

Found in:

Angelo, Thomas A. & K. Patricia Cross (1993). *Classroom Assessment Techniques - A Handbook for College Teachers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass (2nd ed.).

http://fm.iowa.uiowa.edu/fmi/xsl/tgi/data_entry.xsl?-db=tgi_data&-lay=Layout01&-view



The Teaching Goals Inventory (TGI)

(Handout)

A. Each participant:
   1. Considers ONE course you are (or will) teach
   2. Responds (by circling in pencil) to each item on the TGI in relation to that particular course

B. Participants form small groups:
   Explain your responses to team members

C. General discussion: what have we learned?

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No-3 Instructional Strategies

- Decide on a mix of strategies to shape basic skills .
- The chosen strategies must fit with the outcomes you hope to achieve

- Examples of general instructional strategies:
  - Training and coaching
  - Lecturing and explaining
  - Inquiry and discovery
  - Field work and community-based work
  - Experiential opportunities (such as internships) and reflection (portfolios)

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No-4 Considering Issues of Assessment

(To be discussed at greater length in another session)

- Demonstrations of learning should include multiple ways to represent knowledge and skills
- Consider the role and rationale for individual and group assessment opportunities
- Provide worked examples and grading rubrics where possible so that all learners know what constitutes good (successful) work
- Consider using both formative and summative modes of assessment

Examples of Assessment Tools

- Products (essays, research reports, other projects)
- Performance assessments (music, dance, dramatic performance [e.g., role play], science experiments, demonstrations, debates….)
- Process-focused assessment (journals, learning logs, reflective statements, oral presentations)
- Assessment of recall and application at the highest cognitive level (Bloom's et al. taxonomies)

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Reflecting on your teaching

Reflection may include:

- Learner
- Teacher
- Subject matter
- Learning context.
- Evaluation

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Thank you