

How to design your course

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LING 241B

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What to teach

What would you be interested in teaching?¹

¹This presentation is heavily based on the BOK Center material and on the slides presented during the Bok Seminar: Grading and Feedback Across Disciplines taught in Spring 2022 by Yasemin Kalender and Jonah Johnson.

²The resources here might help you!

What to teach

What would you be interested in teaching?¹

Why would you be interested in teaching this topic?²

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What to teach

Let's build a course that you would love to teach!

Course topics

What to teach

- ★ Instead of starting with the content to be covered, the textbook to be used, or even the test to be passed, you begin with the goals.

What to teach

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Adapted from Wiggins, G. & McTighe, J. (2005). Understanding by design (2nd edition). ASCD.

Ask yourself

Aligning your Design

Alignment

Learning Goals and Objectives



Assessments



Scaffolding

What should students know or be able to do by the end of your course?

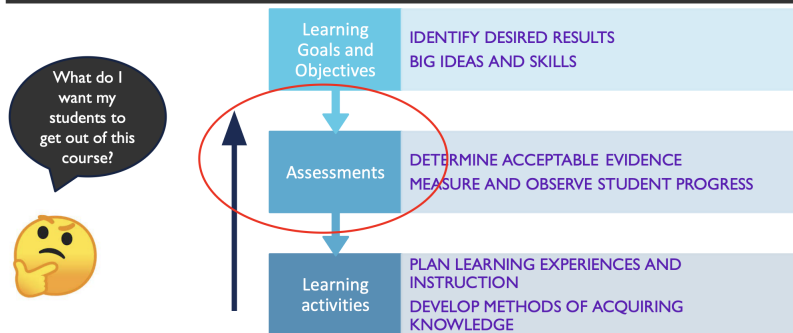
How will you know if they get there?

What will you do to get them there?

Wiggins, G. and McTighe, J., (1998), Understanding by Design: Englewood Cliffs, NJ; Prentice Hall

Backward Design

Backward Design



Wiggins G and McTighe J. [Understanding by Design](#): Prentice Hall Press, 1998.

What to teach

Let's try again!

Backward design

What to teach

You can model your course using the schedule here!

Our design

We still miss one important component for our course!

Our design

We still miss one important component for our course!

Assessment!

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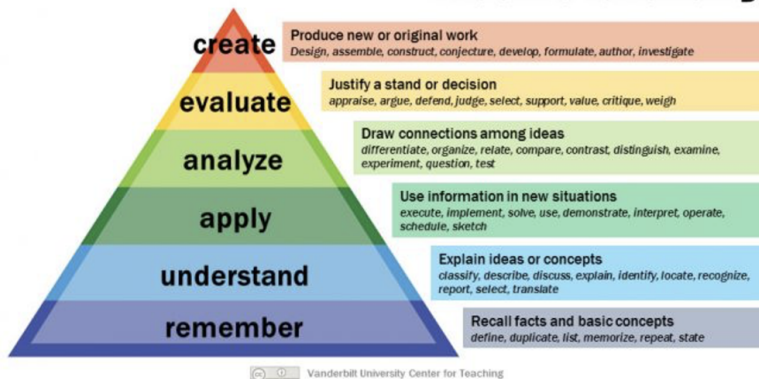
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Assessment

Why do we assess our students?

Helpful to consider

Bloom's Taxonomy



Assessment types

Formative versus Summative Assessment

In a course, **summative assessments** can test part or all of one or more objectives and should come at key inflection points in the course. Knowing what you want students to be able to do, you need to help them develop the skills and knowledge they will need (**scaffolding**).

To help them get there, we suggest figuring out where they are starting (using **diagnostic assessment**) and design low-stakes opportunities (called **formative assessment**) where students can practice and get feedback that will help them develop the knowledge and skills for the summative assignment.

Diagnostic Assessment
measures what students already think, know, or know how to do.

Formative Assessment
provides low-stake opportunities to gain skills and knowledge; practice; and get feedback before summative assessments.

Summative Assessment
occurs at key inflection points, tests student mastery, and can provide practice and feedback before a later summative assessment.

Scaffolding

	Typical Expos class	Typical intro science class
Week1		
Week2	Response paper	(First week of section)
Week3	Response paper	Pset 1 due
Week4	Paper 1 due	Pset 2 due
Week5	Response paper	Pset 3 due
Week6	Response paper	Midterm 1
Week7	Response paper	Pset 4 due
Week8	Response paper	Pset 5 due
Week9	Paper 2 due	Pset 6 due
Week10	Response paper	Midterm 2
Week11	Response paper	Pset 7 due
Week12	Response paper	Pset 8 due
Week13	Response paper	Pset 9 due
Week14	Paper 3 due	Midterm 3
Reading period		
Finals week		Final

A useful webpage to check

Nontraditional ways of assessment

- Annotation tools
- Timeline tools
- ★ You can use this link to get in touch with related people.

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Grading

Why do we grade our students?

Feedback

Feedback should help students with their learning

Feedback

Feedback should help students with their learning and should help instructors with their teaching.

Feedback

Remember the important principles we should follow!

Feedback

Remember the important principles we should follow!

Equality and equity

Feedback

Remember the important principles we should follow!

Equality and equity

How can we grade students fairly in a large class with several sections and a large teaching team while being efficient?

Rubric

Rubric is our savior!

³The slides on rubris are mostly based on the document [here](#). 

Rubric

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Answer key vs. Rubric³

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What about rubrics

- Explicit criteria that describe more/less successful versions of each criterion

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- Explicit criteria that describe more/less successful versions of each criterion
- Transparency
- Alignment of the rubric with the course
- Consistency

Grading tools

Grading tools:

- ★ Speedgrader
- ★ Gradescope

Let's work on together!

A quick example!

Let's work on together!

A quick example!

Check the PSET!

Important points

- ★ Grading begins when you write the assignment (NA for us in many cases).

Important points

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- ★ Develop an initial rubric based on the answer key.

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- ★ Develop an initial rubric based on the answer key.
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- ★ Keep track of all modifications to the rubric.
- ★ Be consistent in how we score students' work.

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In an ideal world, we better

- ★ Develop an initial rubric based on the answer key.
- ★ Read a good number of student responses before starting grading.
- ★ Keep track of all modifications to the rubric.
- ★ Be consistent in how we score students' work.
- ★ Be consistent across a teaching team.

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Let's build it up!

Syllabus template

Let's build it up!

Syllabus template

You can access this template [here](#).

Let's build it up!

Make sure to include these:

Let's build it up!

Make sure to include these:

- ☐ Names, contact info, office hours for teaching staff
- ☐ Statement on accommodations for students with disabilities (using standard FAS wording)
- ☐ Prerequisite coursework or skills
- ☐ Required/recommended textbooks and other resources
- ☐ Learning objectives of the course

Let's build it up!

Make sure to include these:

- ☐ Curriculum topics and schedule
- ☐ Frequency of assessments (homework, papers, etc.)
- ☐ Policy on grading (and re-grading)
- ☐ Dates and nature of exams

Let's build it up!

Make sure to include these:

- ☐ Policy on extensions / late work
- ☐ Policy on lecture or section absences
- ☐ Policy on collaboration between students
- ☐ Policy on the use of outside materials
- ☐ Policy on the use of generative AI (if concerned)

Let's build it up!

Important reminders:

- Identify the schedule of your tutorial along with the weekly readings and assignments

Let's build it up!

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- Identify the schedule of your tutorial along with the weekly readings and assignments
- Keep in mind that tutorials count as regular courses for undergraduates and are expected to have the same amount of work (roughly 4-6 hours of work outside of class per week).

Let's build it up!

Important reminders:

- Identify the final project, if any, along with the due date (which should be at least 4 days before the due date for final course grades for courses without regular final examinations)

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- Identify the students' responsibilities (e.g.. participation, timely completion of assignments). If you want your students to lead at least one discussion of the readings, please put this in writing.

Let's build it up!

Important reminders:

- Identify the final project, if any, along with the due date (which should be at least 4 days before the due date for final course grades for courses without regular final examinations)
- Identify the students' responsibilities (e.g.. participation, timely completion of assignments). If you want your students to lead at least one discussion of the readings, please put this in writing.
- Explain how the students' final grades will be calculated and any special grading criteria that you will apply; use percentages, e.g. "Problem Sets: 50%"

Wrapping up

Let's check the example syllabi!

Wrapping up

Pay attention to the followings before you finalize your syllabus:

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Does this syllabus make the subject matter appeal to a potential audience of?

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Remember that there will be students who are already interested in the subject and those who are not so interested in the subject.

Wrapping up

Does the timeline make sense for a six-week course?

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Assess:

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Wrapping up

Does the timeline make sense for a six-week course?

Assess:

- the amount of subject matter (can all the subject matter be covered?)
- the breadth of subject matter (does the scope make sense for undergraduates to learn within six weeks)
- Is there time scheduled at the end to cover everything (if necessary)

Wrapping up

Is the assessment scheme for the course reasonable?

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- How long will the assignments take? (too long vs too short)

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- How long will the assignments take? (too long vs too short)
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Is the assessment scheme for the course reasonable?

- How long will the assignments take? (too long vs too short)
- Do the assignments accurately reflect what students have learned in the course?
- If there is a final presentation, is enough time given in the schedule to account for this?

Feedback

Always ask for feedback!