

## COURSE PLANNING CHECKLIST

The following checklist will serve as a quick review of the steps in course planning.

### 1. **Define Education Purposes**

What are your beliefs about the purpose of education?

- To enable social change
- To teach effective thinking
- To facilitate systematic instruction
- To provide personally enriching experiences
- To teach the great ideas and discoveries of humankind
- To teach life skills
- To teach value clarification

### 2. **Set Course Goals**

Are your course goals affected by any of the following?

- Those of a senior lecturer for whom you teach
- Your program
- Your college mission
- The expectations of faculty teaching more advanced courses in which your students will enroll later
- Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for the degree program
- College achievement tests

On which is a greater emphasis placed?

- Teaching practical knowledge **or** teaching theory
- Teaching facts **or** teaching problem-solving skills
- Direct career entry after college **or** enrollment in graduate/professional school
- The discipline **or** student development

Where is your course located on the “curricular map?”

- General education course for anyone
- General education course for majors and others
- Introductory course for majors
- Introductory course in a technical career program
- Advanced course for majors
- Capstone course for degree program
- Division-wide core course
- College-wide core course

### 3. **Select Course Content**

What are the reasons for selecting content?

- Students find it enjoyable.
- It is easy to learn.
- It is a fundamental discipline concept.
- It teaches important skills.
- It illustrates the discipline’s mode of research.
- It stimulates students to search for meaning.
- It encourages students to pursue the quest for knowledge.

It inter-relates fundamental/lower level concepts into broader/higher level concepts.

4. **Arrange Course Content**

Which of the following schemes do you use for arranging content?

- Naturally occurring relationships
- A desire to teach problem-solving skills
- The organization of major concepts
- How students learn knowledge
- Students' future career needs
- A desire to help students clarify values

5. **Consider Student Goals and Characteristics**

What are the goals of your students?

- To learn about the structure of the field
- To learn to see relationships in the field
- To learn to see relationships between fields
- To understand scientific principles and concepts
- To learn to think critically and logically
- To learn to interpret data
- To become aware of and open to diverse views
- To gain a historic perspective
- To acquire aesthetic sensitivity
- To enhance creative abilities
- To learn effective communication skills
- To improve study skills
- To develop a personal code of ethics and values
- To look for meaning in life
- To acquire social skills
- To become aware of social issues
- To learn to help others
- To become a good citizen
- To pass an exam
- To prepare for a career
- To prepare for graduate or professional school

What are the characteristics of your students?

- Abilities and capacities
- Preparation
- Motivation
- Expectations
- Out-of-class pressures
- Previous college experiences
- Intended majors
- Learning styles

6. **Choose Instructional Modes**

To what extent is your choice of instructional mode affected by the following?

- Student characteristics

Class size  
 Time constraints  
 Financial Constraints  
 Discipline constraints

What teaching methods do you plan to use?

Passive methods (lectures, films, readings, etc.)  
 Active methods (discussions, laboratory or clinic)  
 Projects, field trips, research projects, etc.

7. **Select Readings**

Will you use one or more textbooks, journal articles, or monographs?

Yes       No

If you require students to purchase textbooks, do they meet the following criteria?

Absolutely necessary  
 Reasonably priced and readily available  
 Well-organized and visually appealing  
 Unbiased – racially, sexually, or ethnically

8. **Plan to Get Student Feedback**

What methods will you use to obtain feedback from students?

Quizzes or tests  
 Papers or projects  
 Attendance  
 Facial or body language  
 Class participation  
 Coming to office hours  
 Course evaluations

How often will you obtain feedback?

9. **Seek Advice from Colleagues and Other Experts**

What types of people are most readily available to give you advice?

Faculty mentor  
 Department chair  
 Media specialist  
 Instructional Designer

For additional help with course design, planning, and/or facilitation, contact the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) and/or the Distance Education Department.