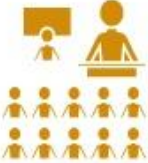




Flexible Course Structure Guide



Designing a Flipped, Blended, Remote or Online Course?



Key Structural Principles:

- ❖ **Maintain a consistent structure each week** so that students can easily find their assignments.
- ❖ **Be clear about expectations** like work quality, participation and deadlines. Rubrics are a great tool to help facilitate this!
- ❖ **Include a variety of learning opportunities.** This is a [Universal Design](#) and [Inclusive Pedagogy](#) principle that improves accessibility for all learners, and makes practice and assessment more meaningful.
- ❖ Pay close attention to **Course Alignment** 

Use the buttons in the bottom right or the menu on the left to navigate around this tutorial.

Other key considerations when moving online are things like how to build community, maintain engagement, and rethink proctored exams. See the [CFDE website](#) for more Quick-tip Tutorials.

Notes:

What is Course Alignment?

This is the **connection between Learning Objectives, Course Content & Activities, and Standards-based Assessment**. Course Alignment can be achieved by paying attention to the course design process. (This tutorial is designed to walk you through the course design process).

Why does this matter?

When you have strong course alignment, **students know what to expect**. They know what you want them to know or do and to the degree that you expect them to do it. **It eliminates guessing games.**

Your **class activities are a simulation, or practice for, the course assessments**. The assessments communicate to you (and them) the **degree to which students have successfully achieved each learning objective**.



Designing a Flipped, Blended, Remote or Online Course?



1
Begin with your Course Outline
click

2 **Weekly Overview & Learning Objectives**

3 **Content**

4 **Learning Activities**

5 **Standards- based Assessment**



repeat!



Course Outline = Road Map

- ✓ Describes what the students will be **doing each week** -- how, why, does it work?
- ✓ A large part of development process is working through a detailed course outline and once that is complete, it should make putting the course together and creating/finding course content much quicker and easier.
- ✓ Use a **Course Outline Template** to help organize the process.



Course Outline = Road Map

Your Road Map is Based on Your Course Learning Goals. It needs:

- ✓ Break down Topics by Week - i.e. Weekly Overviews
- ✓ Weekly Learning Objectives
- ✓ Content
- ✓ Activities
- ✓ Assessments

Prof(f) Tip: Use Modules and Pages in Canvas to set this structure up. See the Resource tab (upper right) for [Teaching with Technology Tips](#)

Overview & Learning Objectives

Providing Clarity & Transparency

Overviews and Learning Objectives are important because they **give students the transparency they need to succeed** in an environment that may have fewer social cues than they are used to.

These are a recommended best practice in any class, **but are especially essential if you are moving to a remote or online format**. They provide the structure and consistency that a regular scheduled meeting time and space might otherwise provide.

Why Weekly?
click

Why Weekly?

Online courses are often designed by the week because in the online format, most activities are spread throughout the week more than they might be in a typical face-to-face course. Lectures can be viewed more flexibly, online discussions require more time, group work can occur at variable times, etc. In any environment learning happens both in and outside of class, but in the online environment this is especially prevalent and planned for, and the weekly schedule can make this more manageable.

Pro(f) Tip: Keep the day of the week the same for each type of activity. This helps reinforce structure and continuity. For example, original discussion posts always due mid-week, responses by end-of week; Synchronous sessions mid-week; group work throughout the week at the group's discretion – weekly group work, project pieces, homework, research etc. due end of week.

Overview

This statement should be topical and address the major concepts or themes of the lessons this week. What is the big picture?

Example:

This lesson we will address the purpose of Overviews and Behavioral Learning Objectives in a course. You will practice writing an Overview and Behavioral Learning Objectives for a course of your own.

This lesson will address...
It is important because...



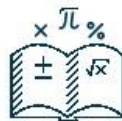
history, civics,
philosophy



science, lab,
research,
analysis



collaboration,
outreach,
community
engagement



math,
engineering



music, performance,
theory, composition



architecture, design,



film, media,
directing, producing



literature,
writing,
composition,
storytelling



research, interviews,
language,
presentation

Behavioral Learning Objectives

A statement that

- Begins with an action verb making it behavioral & measurable
- Describes what it is you want to students to be able to know or do after completing a unit, lesson, or class.

Example:

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

1. Write an overview statement and behavioral learning objective
2. Explain the value of learning objectives

Class Example

click

By the end of this week, you will be able to...



write, compose,
draw



explain, discuss,
interview



create, illustrate,
draft, design



recall, list,
identify, define,
recognize



calculate,
analyze,
solve



research,
conduct,
design, execute



compare, critique,
defend



present, defend,
demonstrate



play, compose,
interpret, sing

Behavioral Learning Objectives

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click

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draft, design

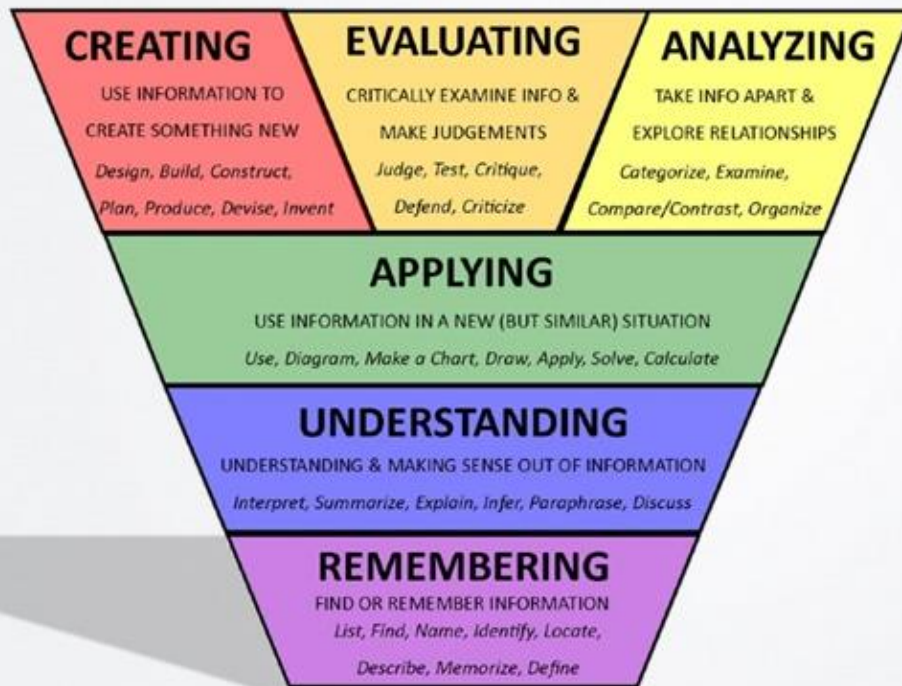


Example from CHEM 150:

By the end of class students will be able to:

1. **Explain** the difference between atomic mass and mass number.
2. **Identify** the number of protons and neutrons in an isotope.
3. **Describe** the basic functioning of a mass spectrometer.
4. **Estimate and calculate** the percent abundance of each isotope from a mass spectrum.
5. **Apply** the concept of probability to isotopic abundance of molecular compounds

Use Bloom's Taxonomy!



See the resources tab for a link to the Bloom's Verbs
<https://bokcenter.harvard.edu/taxonomies-learning>

Work through different levels

The Levels move from basic understand/skill to the most complex. Where you start might depend on where your course falls in the overall curriculum and what kind of exposure your students have already had to the topic.

Avoid the term "understand"

How do you know they understand? What are they doing to demonstrate this?

Taking an exam?

(Identifying, Recalling)

Participating in class?

(Discussing, Explaining)

Completing a project?

(Creating, Designing)

Course Content

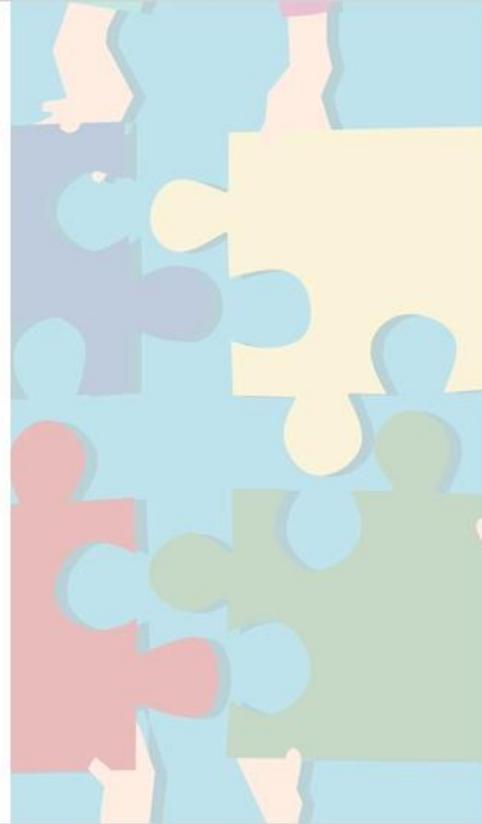
What do I need?

Look to your Class Learning Objectives to help you determine WHAT content you need each week.

A few things to be mindful of:

1. **Do not assign content (readings, lectures, or otherwise) that is not part of a learning objective.** If you think the content is important enough to assign, it is important enough to be noted as part of a learning objective. Being attentive to this will help with not over-assigning work.
2. **Don't over assign work!** It is an easy trap to fall into especially in online or hybrid courses because you don't always have a hard stop time to cut off your lecture if you don't get to it.
3. **Be clear about the purpose of the content.** If there are some items that are more important than others, note this! Designating a "must read" from "supplementary readings" will help ensure that everyone prioritizes what you want them to.

Pro(f) Tip: If there are a few readings/presentations/videos that cover the same thing, split up which students are assigned each piece. Then, create discussion groups where students consumed different pieces and have them share and compare what they learned in each piece. This is called a "[jigsaw activity](#)".



OK, I have what, now HOW?

When thinking about content you might immediately think of your slide deck or in-class lectures. These should look different in a flipped, hybrid, remote or online environment. In all cases, you will have less "seat time" and will have to redesign what this looks like.



Consider the options!

If the content is one-direction, meaning the student is either listening, reading, viewing etc., with no back and forth—the content should be consumed outside of any synchronous class time. Long lectures fall into this category!

What does this mean?

Essentially, no long lectures. Anything that was more than ~7 minutes of presentation during a class time needs to be rethought. This does not mean that you should record 50-75 minute lectures for each week.

First, do a search. Does the information already exist in a format that students can access? (text book, ebook, video, website, simulations, apps etc.)

If yes, don't reinvent the wheel! Link to those sources and supplement the consumption of the content with thoughtful discussion questions, online quizzes, scenarios and more.

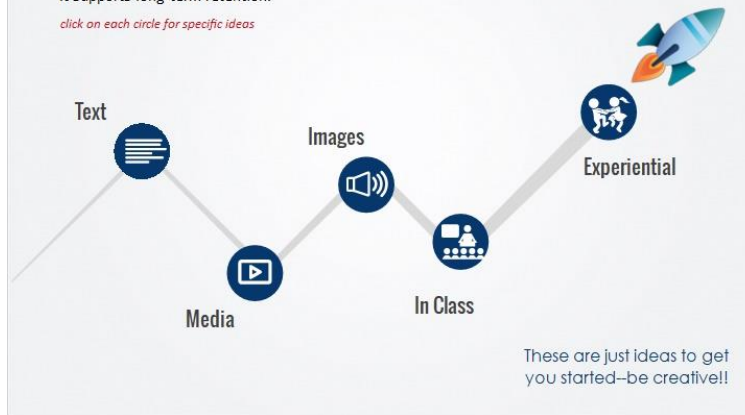
If no, you will have to think about the best way to present the content to the students. This could be through educational videos, notes, recorded slide decks etc.

Resource: [Getting Started with Video \(pdf\)](#)

Mix it up!

Try to use a variety of delivery methods throughout the course! This is inline with inclusive pedagogy practices and it supports long-term retention.

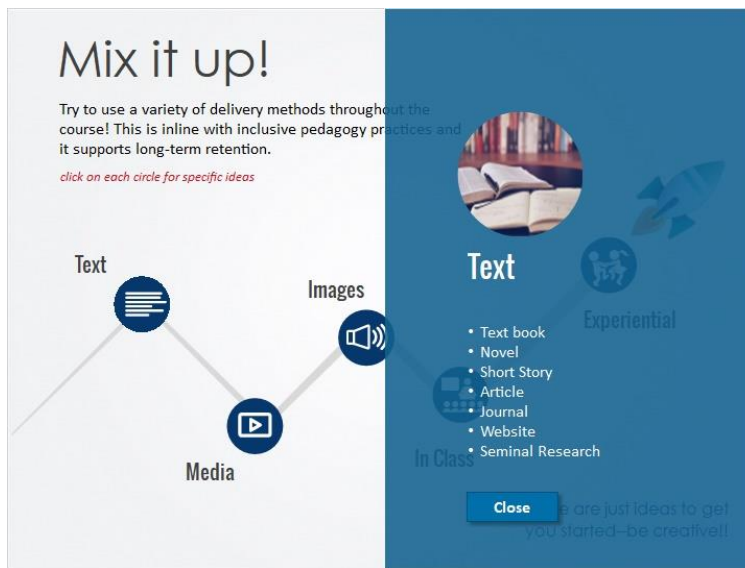
click on each circle for specific ideas



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click on each circle for specific ideas

Text

Images

Media

Images

- Pictures
- Illustrations
- Cartoons
- Graphs
- Charts
- Infographics

Experiential

In Class

Close These are just ideas to get you started—be creative!!

Mix it up!

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click on each circle for specific ideas

Text

Images

Media

Classroom or Zoom

- Lecture
 - Mini-lecture - 7-12 min
 - Create a story
 - Use the survey function in Zoom to do quick checks for understanding
- Demonstration
- Student-led session
 - Presentation
 - Lecture

Experiential

In Class

Close These are just ideas to get you started—be creative!!

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click on each circle for specific ideas

Text

Images

Media

Experiential

- Attend an event
 - Meeting
 - Performance
 - Game
- Conduct an interview
- Visit a lab

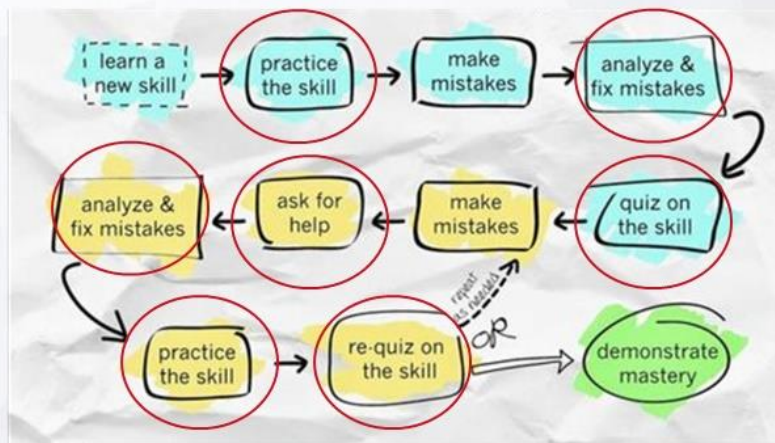
Experiential

In Class

Close These are just ideas to get you started—be creative!!

Learning Activities = Practice

- This is where students will **PRACTICE** using the knowledge or skills identified in the Learning Objectives and presented in the Content.
- This is a space to provide “low-stakes” or “formative” assessment (homework, class work, quizzes), provide feedback, learn through failure.
- Repetition is your friend!! **You are the Coach!**



https://mlinda.buncombeschools.org/staff/malloy__autumn__math_/standards_based_grading

Synchronous or Asynchronous? ?

Trying to decide whether or not the learning activity needs to be done in real-time?



You can practice dribbling a ball independently, but you would need a partner to practice passing!

Start with the learning objective:

- What do they need to practice?
 - What is the behavior they are practicing?
 - What is the VERB in the objective?
- How are they able to practice this?
 - Can they do it independently or do they need a partner or a group?
- Does the feedback need to be immediate?
- Does the practice need to be observed in real-time?

Asynchronous activities give students more flexibility as to length of practice and self-reflection.

Synchronous activities allow students to interact with each and receive immediate external feedback.

Synchronous

Instructors and students gather at the same time and interact in “real time” with a very short or “near-real time” exchange between instructors and students.

Asynchronous

Instructors prepare course materials for students in advance of students’ access. Students may access their course materials at a time of their choosing and will interact with each over a longer period of time.

Ideas for Learning Activities

Try to provide a variety of ways that students can practice interacting with the content or developing their skills. For Example:

- If your learning goals are about remembering content – try online quizzes, discussions, explanatory projects (music videos, recorded white boards, etc.), games (Jeopardy!) etc.
- If your learning goal is improving writing – allow students to choose what they want to write for – a research paper, a website, a story, a blog, a play etc.

Be creative and have fun—that will also enhance learning!

Discussions

Exploration/PBL

Projects

Problem Sets

Games

Simulations

Service Learning/Civic Engagement

Discussion Board (Asynchronous)

- Be specific in your prompt
- Gives everyone a chance to respond – no time constraints
- Can help prepare students for class - ensures they are doing their work
- See Tips for Online Discussions

Zoom - (Synchronous)

- Whole-class discussion
 - To increase participation and impact, give students a few minutes to jot down some thoughts before you begin.
 - Have them share their ideas with a partner first.
- Small group discussions

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Service Learning/Civic Engagement

Exploratory or Problem-Based Learning

- Give them a problem or a challenge to explore and come up with a solution
- Ask them a question and have them research the answer
- *Labs tend to fall into this high-impact category—take advantage!*

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Practice essential skills

- Design or build a website
- Complete a lab
- Complete a research paper
- Write a play
- Compose a musical score
- Design a car

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Simulations

Service Learning/Civic Engagement

Repeated Practice

- Great for skills that need repetition to acquire mastery, or where the same thing can be asked or interpreted in a variety of ways
- If done in class you can provide immediate feedback or students can work through challenging problems together
- Math, science
- *This is where you can use the flipped classroom approach: Lecture gets off-loaded to outside work, traditional homework is done in class.*

Ideas for Learning Activities

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Games

Simulations

Service Learning/Civic Engagement

Having fun is a great way to create lasting memories!

- Jeopardy
- Quizzo/Trivia
- Look for course-related apps
- Create badges for students to earn
- Be creative!

Ideas for Learning Activities

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Problem Sets

Games

Simulations

Service Learning/Civic Engagement

Role-play or computer-based

- Create real-world scenarios for students to participate in
 - Debates, counseling, patient care
- Business scenario and simulation
- Technical simulations
 - Labs
 - [PHET Interactive Simulations](#)
 - [MERLOT Virtual Labs](#)
 - Engineering

Ideas for Learning Activities

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Discussions

Exploration/PBL

Projects

Problem Sets

Games

Simulations

Service Learning/Civic Engagement

Get Involved

- Volunteer at local organizations
 - Museums, schools, theaters, news outlets, publishers, design studios
- Promote relevant issues or causes through civic engagement

The Value of Formal Student Assessment

Why?

Be Authentic

Use Variety

Expectations

Evaluation

The Value of Formal Student Assessment

Why? Be Authentic Use Variety Expectations Evaluation

Why?

We want to know **what students know or are able to do and the degree to which they know it or are able to do it.**

- How well do students perform a course specified skill (writing, speaking, creating) or demonstrate knowledge?

We want professors in other courses to know **what skill and knowledge levels students have as they proceed through a program.**

- What can they expect from students as they begin upper level courses?

We want to **show that students have the specified skills and knowledge that a program claims to give them.**

- Formal grades, assignments and portfolios (hard copies, online or digital) are ways to demonstrate this.


The Value of Formal Student Assessment

Why? Be Authentic Use Variety Expectations Evaluation

Be Authentic

How will they **use this information in the future?** How will they be **demonstrating this knowledge?**

- Provide opportunities for on-going, informal assessments to give students feedback about how to improve for higher-stakes assessments.
- The most accurate assessments evaluate students in an authentic or real-world situation. Think about projects, discussions, presentations, interviews etc.



The Value of Formal Student Assessment

Why?

Be Authentic

Use Variety

Expectations

Evaluation

Use Variety

Allow students to **demonstrate skills and knowledge in a variety of ways.**

- This ensures that students practice areas where they are weak but also have the opportunity to demonstrate and use their strengths.

Incorporate both "high stakes" (mid-term/final exams & projects) and "low stakes" (weekly discussions, one-minute papers etc.) assessments into your course.

- Compiling all the information will give you a more accurate

Written essays	Research paper and/or presentation	Written exams	Oral exams
Group or individual presentations	Group or individual projects	Videos/Digital Narrations	Podcasts
Websites	Narrated Whiteboards	Quiz	Discussions

Step Text

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Incorporate both "high stakes" (mid-term/final exams & projects) and "low stakes" (weekly discussions, one-minute papers etc.) assessments into your course.

- Compiling all the information will give you a more accurate measure of their knowledge and skill levels.
- All assessments should be tied to a course objective so all information will be relevant and useful.

Try to use at least three different types if a course!

The Value of Formal Student Assessment

Why?

Be Authentic

Use Variety

Expectations

Evaluation

Expectations

Provide Clear Expectations

- What do you expect from the students in terms of
 - Content
 - Preparation
 - Attention to Detail
 - Written or oral presentation
 - Show them your rubric!

Provide examples and explanations

Include intermittent due dates when possible

- Helps keep students on track
- Especially useful in intro level courses - help students develop project management skills

The Value of Formal Student Assessment

Why?

Be Authentic

Use Variety

Expectations

Evaluation

Evaluation

When the **assessments are subjective or complex** it helps to create a **grading rubric**.

This will:

- Communicate your expectations to the students
- Outlines your expectations for YOU
- Helps keep grading even and prevents bias
- Keeps the same standards for all projects
- Allows you to emphasize the important aspect of the assignment but still take other factors into consideration



	Assessment	Rubric	Final Rubric	Notes
Assessment	Map of the United States	Map of the United States	Map of the United States	
Final Rubric				
Notes				

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Resources:

- [Rubric Making Tools](#)
- [Value Rubrics](#)

From What is Value?: VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education) is a campus-based assessment approach developed and led by AAC&U. VALUE rubrics provide needed tools to assess students' own authentic work, produced across students' diverse learning pathways, fields of study and institutions, to determine whether and how well students are meeting graduation level achievement in learning outcomes that both employers and faculty consider essential.