



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

COMMERCE

Department of Institutional Effectiveness and Research
Curriculum Mapping for Academic Programs

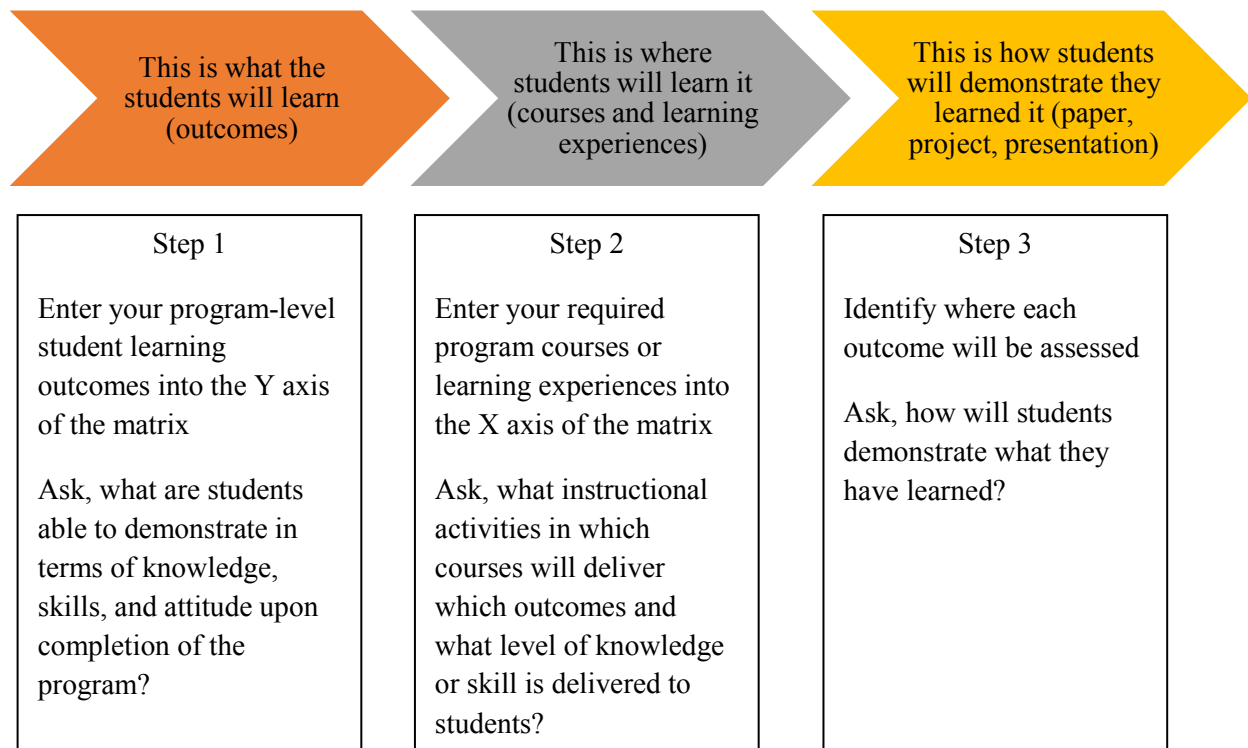
What is a curriculum map?

A curriculum map is a visual representation of a guided learning pathway

Curriculum maps—

- utilize a matrix format to visually represent the alignment between program student learning outcomes and required courses or learning experiences
- are commonly used as a tool for curriculum planning and for program assessment
 - For planning purposes: use curriculum maps to analyze the effectiveness of the designed learning pathway and to determine whether all targeted learning outcomes are delivered through the program curriculum
 - For assessment purposes: use curriculum maps to identify where learning can be assessed throughout the curriculum and where modifications to curriculum and pedagogy will have the opportunity to most positively impact student learning

Mapping the Curriculum



Characteristics of an Effective Curriculum

Treats a learning goal as a promise

Responsive to the needs of students, employers, and society

Greater than the sum of its parts - A collection of courses is not a program

Gives students ample and diverse opportunities to achieve key program learning goals

Has appropriate, progressive rigor

Is focused and simple

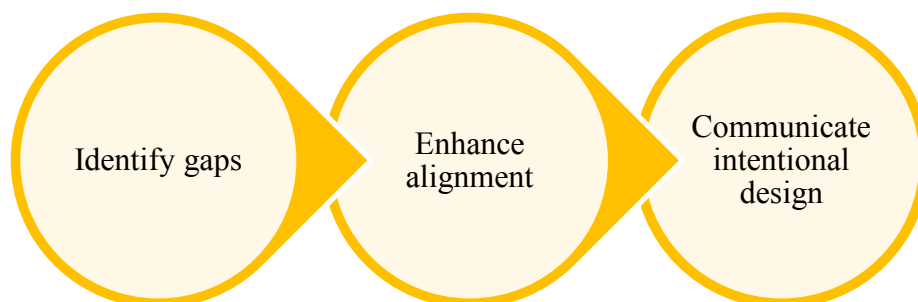
Uses research-informed strategies to help students learn and succeed

Is consistent across venues and modalities

(Linda Suskie, 2017, slides 3-12)

Benefits to Curriculum Mapping

Curriculum mapping can be most beneficial when developed through *collaborative reflection* and *dialogue* with a representative grouping of program faculty. Determine *what learning experiences are common to all students* in the program and should therefore be included (required courses or experiential learning, etc.) vs. *what learning experiences are optional* and should therefore not be solely counted on to deliver program-level learning outcomes. Use the curriculum map to enhance alignment across the curriculum and ensure that all students are given an opportunity to learn what the program has identified as key knowledge and skills.



Using a Curriculum Map for Analysis

Once the curriculum map has been completed, use the map to analyze the program curriculum and assessment plan. Revisit the map each annual assessment cycle to inform interpretation and use of assessment results for improvement.

Curriculum Design

- Is every program learning outcome taught in one or more core course?
- Are students offered multiple opportunities and methods by which to gain key knowledge or skills?
- How does course sequencing contribute to the development of each learning outcome?
- Are outcomes which are covered in multiple courses delivered at varying proficiency levels across the curriculum?
- Are there any redundant courses or learning experiences?
- Are there any core courses or learning experiences that do not deliver program-level learning outcomes?

Assessment Planning

- In what courses are assessments embedded?
- Are students given multiple opportunities and methods through which they can demonstrate what they have learned?
- At what level of proficiency are students expected to demonstrate the learning outcome?
- Have students been given an opportunity to learn the knowledge/skill they are being assessed on?

Assessment Results

- What linkages exist between student performance at the assessment stage and student performance at developmental stages across the curriculum?
- In what courses or learning experiences along the learning pathway might factors have influenced student achievement of program-level learning outcomes upon graduation?
- In what courses or learning experiences might modifications to curriculum or pedagogy lead to the most gains in student learning?

Resources and References

Resources available on the IER webpage

Curriculum Mapping Template – Basic

Curriculum Mapping Template – Advanced

Curriculum Mapping Template Instructions

References consulted

Carnegie Mellon University. Curriculum mapping tool. Retrieved January 23, 2019 from <https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/assessment/assessprogram/tools/Curriculum%20Mapping%20Tool.html>

National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment. Mapping Learning: A Toolkit of Resources. Retrieved January 23, 2019 from <http://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/documents/Mapping%20Learning.pdf>

Suskie, Linda. (2017). Using curriculum maps to understand & improve curriculum design [PowerPoint slides]. A&M-Commerce Quality Day.