

Guiding Questions to Ask When Planning Your Course

Where are you?

What *situational factors* play an important role?
e.g., kind of students, kind of learning spaces, kind of curriculum, your own values, beliefs, skills as an instructor, key competencies required of your graduates?

Where do you want to go?

What are your *learning goals*? What would you like the students to get out of the course, core competencies?
e.g., foundational knowledge, application, integration, collaborating with others, change in values

How would you know if the students got there?

How do you know if students *achieved* these learning goals? How will you *assess student learning*, what *feedback* will you provide to them? What grading system will you use?
e.g., types of exams, nature of assignments, projects, products of student work

How can you help the students get there?

What kinds of *teaching and learning activities* will you use to achieve the set learning goals? What learning experiences are provided? What will the students do? What will you do? How will you sequence these activities?
e.g., reading assignments, interactive lectures, group work, writing, lab work, class discussion, individually-paced computer work

Are all the elements well connected and integrated?

Are the learning objectives, course content, teaching activities, and student evaluation instruments closely interrelated?

Additional Questions to Consider:

What could go wrong?

Analyze the first draft of the course.
What problems may I encounter? How could these problems be prevented?

How will you know how the course is going?

Plan an evaluation of the course, student learning and your teaching performance.
e.g., end-of-term feedback, early-term feedback
How can the evaluation results be used to enrich the course / program curriculum?

Who / what can help?

What resources are available to you to accomplish your goals for the course?