LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Use a "curriculum map" to illustrate which courses and requirements help students meet the intended outcomes. Ideally, the progream will introduce students to each outcome early in the program (indicated an an "I" on the curriculum map). The outcomes are then reinforced and students practice throughout the program ("R"). Near the end of the program, students can demonstrate mastery ("M") and the program collects evidence of that learning ("A"). *Tip: When possible and appropriate, include the type of assignment/activitiy associated with the learning outcome.*

Curriculum Map

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Course/ Requirements	**Outcome 1**	**Outcome 2**	**Outcome 3**	**Outcome 4**	**Outcome 5**
Course 1					
Course 2					
Course 3					
Course 4					
Course 5					
Course 6					
Course 7					
Course 8					
Other*					

(*Required activities or experiences not associated with a particular course. Examples: national licensure exam; presentation at department symposium; service learning; comprehensive exam; dissertation; exit interview)

Key:

I = introduced
R = reinforced/practiced
M = mastery at the senior level or graduate level
A = evidence collected and analyzed

Curriculum Mapping/Curriculum Matrix

1. **What is it? Why do it?**
   Curriculum mapping is a method to align instruction with desired goals and program outcomes. It can also be used to explore what is taught and how. The map or matrix:
   - Documents what is taught and when
   - Reveals gaps in the curriculum
   - Helps design an assessment plan

   Benefits:
   - Improves communication among faculty
   - Improves program coherence
   - Increases the likelihood that students achieve program-level outcomes
   - Encourages reflective practice

2. **What does a curriculum map/matrix look like**?
   It is a table with one column for each learning outcome and one row for each course or required event/experience (or vice versa: each row contains a course and each column lists a learning outcome).

Example:

INTENDED STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Courses	**Apply the scientific method**	**Develop laboratory techniques**	**Diagram and explain major cellular processes**	**Awareness of careers and job opportunities in biological sciences**
BIOL 101	**I**	**I**		**I**
BIOL 202	**R**	**R**	**I**	
BIOL 303	**R**	**M, A**	**R**	
BIOL 404	**M, A**		**M, A**	
Other: Exit Interview				**A**

3. **How is a curriculum map created?**
   1. Faculty members begin with a) the program's intended student learning outcomes, b) recommended and required courses (including General Education courses if appropriate) and c) other required events/experiences (e.g., internships, department symposium, advising session, national licensure exams)
   2. Create the "map" in the form of a table
   3. Mark the courses and events/experiences that currently address those outcomes

a. Enter an "I" to indicate students are introduced to the outcome
b. "R" indicates the outcome is reinforced and students afforded opportunities to practice
c. "M" indicates that students have had sufficient practice and can now demonstrate mastery
d. "A" indicates where evidence might be collected and evaluated for program-level assessment (collection might occur at the beginning and end of program if comparisons across years are desired)

4. Faculty members analyze the curriculum map. They discuss and revise so that each outcome is introduced, reinforced/practiced, and then mastered. In addition, each outcome should have an "A" to indicate that evidence can be collected for program-level assessment.

4. What are some best practices?

- Build in practice and multiple learning trials for students: introduce, reinforce, master. Students will perform best if they are introduced to the learning outcome early in the curriculum and then given sufficient practice and reinforcement before evaluation of their level of mastery takes place.
- Use the curriculum map to identify the learning opportunities (e.g., assignments, activities) that produce the program's outcomes
- Allow faculty members to teach to their strengths (note: each person need not cover all outcomes in a single course). "Hand off" particular outcomes to those best suited for the task.
- Ask if the department/program is trying to do too much. Eliminate outcomes that are not highly-valued and then focus on highly-valued outcomes by including them in multiple courses. (The eliminated outcomes can still be course-level outcomes. They need not disappear completely from the curriculum.)
- Set priorities as a department/program. Everyone working together toward common outcomes can increase the likelihood that students will meet or exceed expectations.
- Communicate: Publish the curriculum map and distribute to students and faculty.
- Communicate: Each faculty member can make explicit connections across courses for the students. For example, at the beginning of the course or unit, a faculty member can remind students what they were introduced to in another course and explain how the current course will have them practice or expand their knowledge. Do not expect students to be able to make those connections by themselves.

The Office of Assessment can tailor a curriculum mapping workshop for your program. Call or email Sue Sydow, susydow1@wsc.edu to schedule.