

Curriculum21/ CICU DRAFT – Course MAP

Department/ School/ Instructor

COURSE TITLE: Mapping the Considerations for Mapping a Course / Unit

OVERVIEW – Purposes/ Pre-requisites

- This is a place for you to describe your unit in a narrative way. What are students learning? How is learning sophisticated from the beginning to the end? How is this unit situated within other units? How are students being engaged in the learning process in this unit? How will you know that they learned what you intended?
- Unit overviews and summaries should be simple and brief. Explanations will come in subsequent elements.
- Notes for the assessment of the initial work are dependent on the completeness of the map.
- If you write "see attached" in any element, it may be helpful just to briefly describe what has been attached.

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS (Big Ideas)

- What are the curriculum content priorities?
- What do you want students' big takeaways to be, particularly if they forget more granular details?
- What are the overall guiding concepts for the learning?

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS (Questions that stimulate student thinking and deepen the understanding of the intended learning)

- It is fine for essential questions to have multiple parts as this might allow for variability in student experience and enrich the shared discussion.
- Note that sometimes, teachers might include essential questions that ask students about information they have not yet learned. These would be supporting essential questions and may not show up at the beginning of a unit, but would rather be punctuated throughout the unit after the learning or some learning has happened. (That's okay, by the way.)
- For essential questions, think NonGoogleable. If in doubt, Google your question. If you get close to a clear answer, it's probably not essential.

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STANDARDS – (ALST / edTPA)

- Make sure that standards are included in each map. They are an essential component of the blueprint.
- For the purposes of this map, edTPA standards and other associated (but outside of the content) standards could be included here.

CONTENT STANDARDS

- Make sure that standards are included in each map. They are an essential component of the blueprint.
- For the purposes of this map, this element includes only content-related standards.

CONTENT –Focus topics/issues/

- Is the specific content (look to the nouns in the standards) represented in the unit?
- Can the content be expanded to represent contemporary content extensions?
- Does the language of the content statement / concept statement (when looked at holistically) address the Essential Understandings / Essential Questions?
- The language of the content / concepts is deliberate and strategic and represented in the language across the whole of the map / unit.

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SKILLS/ STRATEGIES

- Check alignment of skill statements to standards. In some cases, there could be an imbalance, i.e. too many standards and not enough learning skills and vice versa.
- The information in this element should represent, in some form, a skill that students must be able to do. This can be represented as a Specific Skill statement based on measurable verbs, instructional targets, and a descriptor. The more information in the skill statement, the more transparent the plan is.
- Note that skills are what students should be able to do rather than the actions of the teacher.
- Statements that included "Practice" or "Review" are technically activities rather than a skill and should be moved into the Instructional Activities box below.
- The verbs (specifically the higher level cognition verbs, along with their instructional targets) are clearly defined and deliberately written into the assessment plan.

ASSESSMENT/ EVIDENCE / ASSIGNMENTS

- Visual congruence matters here. It is important to visually see the connection between standards, skills, content, and the assessments. That visual congruence is dependent upon consistent language across the map.
- The more information here, the more transparent it is for you and your colleagues.
- If there is some sort of performance task that the students are creating/writing...are you using a rubric? If not, this might be an upgrade opportunity.
- If there is only one form of assessment/assignment on the plan, is it because that is actually the only one, or that perhaps you didn't include some of the formative assessments you use?
- Are the assessments/assignments only in one format? (For instance, just objective/multiple choice, or just a written response or paper?) What information would be gained about learning and cognition if there were multiple types of assessment and/or more opportunities for informal assessments or assessments in multiple modalities?
- Do the assessments/assignments represent a range of thinking from comprehension level to application to evaluation and creation? (Think Bloom's or Depth of Knowledge)
- Do the assessments ask the student to revisit the Essential Understandings and Essential Questions?

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ASSESSMENT/ SUMMATIVE with grading

- See above

VOCABULARY: Professional Terms

- All maps should seek to go beyond just the list of words. Perhaps a summary statement about how you're engaging authentic and embedded vocab instruction?
- Really long lists and really short lists are equally suspicious. What information have you given in the map to make vocab instruction come alive for the reader? If the list is really short, does that mean that the student largely directs vocab instruction? If the list is really long, is there an emphasis on lower level recall rather than conceptual or integrated understanding? Give a little blurb so that anyone who potentially sees your plan, particularly someone who you may eventually/potentially collaborate with, knows where you're heading. (Particularly the student!)

ACTIVITIES / ASSIGNMENTS

- Depending on the nature of the course, this could be as brief or as expansive as the audience demands. (Or as transparency demands)
- While it could include daily or weekly activities, it might be in the best interest of the audience to include a calendar of due dates with assignment blurbs and expectation overviews, particularly if more information is forthcoming about assignments across the course.

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RESOURCES:

- In maps that have a textbook as the only resource, the instruction is practically begging for more sources/resources, which would engage Instructional Shift 2, and potentially have ramifications in Instructional Shifts 3, 5, and 6. (For those courses / maps that are aligning to Common Core parameters.)
- Sometimes, maps include generalities like "Internet," "Smartboard," "Textbook," etc. For the sake of transparency, it might be a good idea to be specific. What web tools, research sites, applications, etc. are you using for instruction? If a particular tech tool is being used, such as an iPad, a Smartboard, or phone, some information about how it's being used and how much it's personalized to the student would be helpful. It might also be a good idea for students to reflect on why they chose a particular tool, presentation method, and/or research methodology.
- Note that there is a lot of power in leveraging a network for learning, specifically using social technologies. Much perspective and divergent thinking happens in both local and global communities for learning.

OPTIONAL ADDENDUM AROUND REFLECTION:

- Just a reminder that the reflections are for AFTER the teaching occurs.
- This is the heart of the map where we document the actual taught curriculum.
- This should be revisited at least every couple of weeks and updated to reflect what worked and what didn't work in instruction. This is what keeps the map / unit a living document.
- Perhaps too, it's a good time to speculate on potential changes for next year.
- Like the collaborative review process, how much of the reflection is collaborative? Conversations around consensus help to situate a particular course in the context of other courses, leading to coherency in a student's program.

OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- Are all of the internal elements working together systemically?
- What is the level of communication / collaboration between departments and instructors? Is that level of collaboration represented in the maps? (Consensus items – agreement on essential elements)
- Are redundancies in the system identified and improved? Likewise, are gaps in the system identified and improved?
- How does student performance across a variety of assessed moments impact changes to the map DURING the learning period?
- Are there skills or activities that can be upgraded in terms of rigor or challenge?
- What is the level of balance in both documenting AND reviewing the curriculum map / unit plan? (And revision of the document based on reflective practice?)