

## Designing for Learning

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Diamond, R.M. (1998). *Designing and Assessing Courses and Curricula: A Practical Guide* 2nd Ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Instructors who are shifting their courses from teacher-centered to learner-centered will find this book helpful in the process of course planning, design, and revision. It offers a theoretical argument for a learner-centered approach and follows this argument with practical guidance for instructors to use in clarifying course goals, assessing student learning, and designing learning experiences.

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Fink, L. D. (2003). *Creating significant learning experiences: An integrated approach to designing college courses*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.

This book is helpful for instructors who, during course planning, have begun to rethink how they teach and how their students learn. The author advocates moving from teacher-centered courses to learner-centered course and discusses what this means and looks like for both professors and students. Fink offers both an argument for this shift as well as practical advice on achieving it in the college classroom.

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Garavalia, L. S., Hummel, J. H., Wiley, L. P., & Huitt, W.G. (1999). Constructing the course syllabus: Faculty and student perceptions of important syllabus components. *Journal on Excellence in College Teaching*, 10 (1), 5-21.

This article reports on an empirical study on both faculty members' and students' perceived importance of syllabus components. Results indicate differences in perceptions between both groups, yet both groups view the course syllabus as an agreement between teacher and learners. Instructors can use the results of this study as they plan their courses and prepare their syllabi to maximize student learning.

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Gross Davis, B. (2009). *Designing or Revising a Course*. In *Tools for Teaching*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition.

This book chapter serves as a practical resource for instructors preparing, designing, or revising courses. It addresses the three leading decisions instructors must make in this process: what to teach, how to teach it, and how to assess what students have learned. The author provides suggestions for instructors to address the "coverage" issue and make choices to limit course content and still maximize learning.

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Grunert, J. (1997). *The Course Syllabus: A Learning-Centered Approach*. Bolton, MA: Anker

Publishing.

Reviews of this book emphasize its value for both new and experienced instructors. Grunert offers a compelling argument and practical advice for creating learning-centered course syllabi. Such an emphasis, Grunert argues, fosters student engagement, meaningful learning, and critical thinking. This book includes checklists and strategies for creating a dynamic course syllabus.

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McKeachie, W. (2005). "Countdown for Course Preparation," In *Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research, and Theory for College and University Teachers*, 12<sup>th</sup> Edition. Wadsworth Publishing, pp. 9-19.

This book is a valuable teaching resource for all instructors. Chapter two specifically focuses on planning and preparing courses. The chapter counts down course preparation from three months prior to course start to one week before course start. McKeachie emphasizes thoughtful planning up front on course elements such as learning objectives and outcomes, textbooks and readings, syllabus preparation, lesson planning, and teaching methods.

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Prégent, R. (1994). *Charting Your Course: How to Prepare to Teach More Effectively*. Magna Publications, Madison, WI.

This book is a good resource for newer instructors who are planning and designing courses for the first time. The author provides practical guidance in articulating learning objectives, assessing student learning, choosing teaching methods, and evaluating teaching.

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Slattery, J. & Carlson, J. (2005). Preparing an effective syllabus: Current best practices. *College Teaching*, 53(4), 159-164.

This article discusses the different ways instructors can use a course syllabus as a teaching and learning tool. It discusses the structural, motivational, and evidentiary components of the syllabus as well as the components that positively impact the teaching and learning process. Since the syllabus is often students' first introduction to a course, this article is helpful for instructors as they plan and prepare their courses.

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Stout, J. (2001). Radical course revision: A case study. *National Teaching and Learning Forum*, 10(4), 1-5.

This short article is written by a professor who discusses her experience of redesigning a neuropsychology course in order to help her students think more critically as they gain skills in the field. The author presents the questioning process she engaged in as she redesigned her course and discusses how this process led her to focus on her students' learning rather than her teaching. This article's value is in its point of view, written by a professor for other professors.

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Wehlburg, C. M. (2006). Meaningful course revision: Enhancing academic engagement using

student learning data. Boston, MA: Anker.

This book offers instructors a data-driven approach to making changes in their courses. Using measures of student learning outcomes, the author discusses how to use this data to focus course design or re-design on students' learning needs. The author offers practical strategies with an emphasis on aligning student learning goals and student learning outcomes.

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Wiggins, G. & McTighe, J. (1998). *Understanding by Design*. Merrill Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River, New Jersey.

This book is an excellent resource for instructors who are creating a new course or re-designing an existing course. The authors suggest a “backwards design” approach when planning a course by starting with learning outcomes and results and finishing with methods and content. This book offers step-by-step practical strategies for course planning and poses essential questions to help instructors keep their focus on student learning.