Curriculum Maps

Curriculum maps are an essential tool for creating a **coherent curriculum** that is systematic, intentional, and organized around student learning. They help reveal gaps in the curriculum, assist faculty in thinking about course sequencing as well as pre-requisites, and help faculty in assessing student learning in their programs.

How to Create a Curriculum Map

Step 1: List the program's student learning outcomes in the columns across the top of the table. In the rows, list each course that is required for students, as well as any other required experiences (such as internships, for example). It is also possible to list the learning outcomes in the left column and the courses across the top.

Step 2: Create the map

- Determine the level of learning for each program outcome in each course and enter an "indicator" into the map.
  - Enter an "I" to indicate courses in which students first learn about key ideas, concepts or skills related to the outcome
  - Enter a "D" where learning is developed through practice and reinforcement as students learn additional knowledge and skills.
  - Enter an "M" to indicate advanced learning of an outcome, where students "master" the learning at the level faculty would like to see from graduates at that degree level. At this level, student learning is often performed with a reasonably high level of sophistication and independence.

Step 3: Analyze the curriculum map and modify the program if necessary

- Each learning outcome should be addressed in at least one required course at a minimum.
  - Ideally, for each outcome, there will be at least one course where the concept or skill is introduced (I), several courses where a skill is developed (D), and at least one course where the learning is mastered (M).
  - Reinforcement can also be accomplished through program electives.
- Each required course should address at least one program-learning outcome.
- Few, if any courses, will address all learning outcomes at once, since there is a limited amount a single course can accomplish.
  - A capstone course may serve as a place where many learning outcomes are integrated and demonstrated at an advanced level.
- Examine the distribution of shared learning opportunities. Does the distribution throughout the curriculum enable students to build on and demonstrate their learning over time? Are courses properly sequenced?

Curriculum Map Template

Key: introduced (I), developed/practiced (D), or mastered (M) by students.

Required Courses and Experiences	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5	Outcome 6

Completed Curriculum Map – *A Hypothetical Psychology Program*

Required Courses and Experiences	Written communication appropriate to the field of psychology, including proper documentation of references and citations in APA Style	Ability to explain and analyze the biological bases of behavior and development	Distinguish between major statistical tests and be able to choose appropriate tests for specific data sets	Evaluate real world examples in terms of course content and knowledge, applying critical thinking skills	Select methodology appropriate to a particular research question	Develop an original research question that builds on an existing body of knowledge	Ability to explain and apply the ethical principles of psychology as established by the APA
Psychology 101	I		I	I		I	I
Psychology 102	I, D	I	D	I		I, D	I, D
Psychology 201		D	D	D			
Psychology 220				D		D	D
Psychology 250	I	D		D			
Psychology 301	D, M	D		D	I		
Psychology 302		D,M		D	D	D	
Psychology 303			D, M	D			
Psychology 401	D			D	D		D
Psychology 402			D	D			
Psychology 435	D, M			D,M			
Psychology 495	M		M	M	D, M	M	M

Adapted from Rochester Institute of Technology