

Valparaiso University Curriculum Mapping

Section 1-What is a Curriculum Map?

- A. Curriculum mapping is a method to align instruction with desired Student Learning Goals and Outcomes.
 - B. It can also be used to explore what is taught and how.
 - C. The map allows you to:
 - Document what SLOs are taught and when
 - Identify gaps in the curriculum
 - Determine if your courses truly match up with your stated SLOs
 - Design an effective assessment process to streamline activities
 - D. Benefits:
 - Improves communication among faculty in a department
 - Improves program coherence
 - Increases the likelihood that students achieve program-level SLOs
 - Encourages reflective practice
 - Assists departments when discussing curriculum changes or revisions
 - Helps curriculum committees understand department requests for curriculum changes

Section 2- What do curriculum maps look like?

There are two basic Maps each department will design.

Curriculum Map I: The first is a mapping of Departmental SLOs to University-wide SLOs (VUSLO) and General Education SLOs (GESLO). This will help us ensure that we are meeting VUSLOs and GESLOs across all programs and majors. This is a simple map/matrix where departments place an 'X' in the box where Department SLOs and VUSLO or GSLOs intersect.

Map I: Hypothetical Mapping of Department SLOs and VUSLOs/GESLOs

VU/Gen Ed SLOs

Place an 'X' in the Box where Program SLO matches with VUSLO or GSLO.

The above sample map shows where there is overlap among SLOs. You will note that not all VSLOs or GSLOs are covered by this 'Department.' It is NOT expected that any department will provide complete coverage of all university-wide SLOs. Additionally, you will note that Program SLO 5 is not linked to any VUSLO or GSLO in this example. There are instances where you might have a very specific SLO that is important in your discipline or field that does not necessarily overlap with the broader SLOs. This is completely acceptable and expected. It is not an issue unless it is determined that there is little or no overlap between the Program and broader SLOs.

Curriculum Map II: Mapping of Courses to Department/Program SLOs

The second map is more involved and will provide a useful tool for departments when considering student learning outcomes, program reviews, and potential curriculum changes. In this Map the department identifies where, and at what level, specific Student Learning Outcomes are being met. It's a matrix with one column for each learning outcome and one row for each course or event/experience.

1. Faculty members begin with a) the program's intended student learning outcomes, b) recommended or required courses (including General Education courses if appropriate) and c) other recommended or required events/experiences/activities (internships, practicums, co-ops, department symposiums, seminars or workshops, national licensure exams, departmental exam, research projects, portfolios, etc.)
2. Create the "map" in the form of a table
3. Mark the courses/events/experiences/activities that currently address those SLOs
 - o Enter an "I" to indicate students are introduced to the SLO
 - o "R" indicates the SLO is reinforced and students afforded opportunities to practice
 - o "M" indicates that students have had sufficient practice and can now demonstrate mastery appropriate for the degree level
 - o "A" indicates where evidence is collected and evaluated for program-level assessment as specified in the Departmental Assessment Plan

Map II : HYPOTHETICAL PROGRAM CURRICULUM MATRIX

Courses/Events	Department Student Learning Outcomes			
	SLO1	SLO2	SLO3	SLO4
SCI 101	I	I		I,A
SCI 202	R	R	I	
SCI 303	R	M, A	R	
SCI 404	M, A		M, A	R
Research Project	M,A	M,A		M,A

The above sample again shows that each course does not cover all SLOs. Additionally, it is important to note that not all SLOs will necessarily have an 'I,' 'R,' and 'M' assigned to them. Some SLOs may be covered completely in one course (M) or may actually involve practicing a skill (R)

during the first course covering an SLO. The I, R, M progression is a general model that will cover most instances, but an absence of this progression does not, in and of itself, indicate a problem with alignment of curriculum to SLOs. It can be helpful, however, if a department identifies an issue with achievement of a specific SLO. The department can simply look at the map to determine where possible changes may be needed to improve student learning. This change can be revising the material in an existing course or developing a new course if it is determined to be necessary.

Another issue can arise if every course covers every SLO. It could mean that the department might need to broaden its course curriculum. However, it is more likely an indication that the program's SLOs are too general and that a discussion might be needed to develop more specific outcomes to differentiate the learning outcomes the department really desires for its students.

Placing the A in the boxes also provides a method to ensure that the department and the Committee on Assessment have an easy table outlining assessment activities.