EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICES
in partnership with

DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY of CALIFORNIA

Curriculum Development Series
Course 1
"A Beginner's Guide to Backward Design Planning"

EDUO 9983 2 Graduate-level Credits/Units

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Note:
This is Course 1 in the 3-Course Curriculum Development Series.
Other courses in this Series:
Course 2: Creating a Unit Plan
Course 3: Unit Design in Action – Aligning Lesson Plans

Course Syllabus

Course Overview:

Is it time to revise or create a new unit of instruction in your curriculum? Identify relevant content standards and your school/district guidelines that apply to this unit. Tackle this work by creating a design to engage your students and deepen their ability to make meaning of learning and transfer to performance. Using the concepts of backward design, develop a unit sketch that defines your desired results, evidence of achieving goals, and instructional learning plan.

Required Text: The *Understanding by Design Guide to Creating High-Quality Units* by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe.

This course is not a pre-requisite for Course 2 in the series: *Creating a Unit Plan*. However, you should start with this course if you are not familiar with backward curriculum design and Wiggins'/McTighe's *Understanding by Design* process.

Course Learning Objectives:

1. Develop a preliminary understanding of backward design concepts for curriculum unit planning.
2. Review a familiar unit of instruction: Identify design strengths and needed improvement based on backward design concepts.
3. Select a unit of instruction you wish to revise or create: Identify existing content standards and your district/school mission and program goals relevant to this unit.
4. As relevant, discuss your project with colleagues/supervisors. Assess their input and degree of their involvement, if any, in your project.
5. Develop an Initial Unit Sketch using the 3 stages of backward design: Desired Results, Evidence of Achieving Goals, Instructional Learning Plan.
6. Using a circle back approach, self-assess the alignment of the 3 stages of your design.

Course Relation to CCS or other Professional Standards:

This course and series align to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in the following propositions:

Proposition 1: Teachers Are Committed to Students and Their Learning

- Teachers Understand How Students Develop and Learn

Proposition 2: Teachers Know the Subjects They Teach and How to Teach Those Subjects to Students

- Teachers Command Specialized Knowledge of How to Convey a Subject to Students

Proposition 3: Teachers Are Responsible for Managing and Monitoring Student Learning

- Teachers Call on Multiple Methods to Meet Their Instructional Goals
- Teachers Engage Students in the Learning Process

Proposition 4: Teachers Think Systematically About Their Practice and Learn from Experience

- Teachers Use Feedback and Research to Improve Their Practice and Positively Impact Student Learning

Assignment Dropboxes:

Submit all assignments as instructed in section entitled “How to Submit Assignments.”

Course Modules:

Module #1: Backward Design Concepts	
Objective	Develop a preliminary understanding of backward design concepts for curriculum unit planning.
Activities and Needed Material	Read the following selections from*: The Understanding by Design Guide to Creating HighQuality Units* by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe (pages 1-56 – Modules A through E). View the video describing backward design. Link: Understanding By Design From your reading and video assignments, **SUBMIT** 1-2-page typed document that: • Identifies the "big ideas" (anchors/schema). • Analyzes (not summarizes) the key components. • Describes what you consider the strengths and relevancy of backward design. • Promotes new insight to your purpose in developing curriculum.
Assessment	The Course Assessment Rubric will be used to assess if the module objective(s) were met. Grades and comments will be issued via the LMS

Module #2: Unit of Instruction Review	
Objective	Review a familiar unit of instruction: Identify the design strengths and needs for improvement of the unit based on backward design concepts.
Activities and Needed Material	Select a unit of instruction that you currently teach and/or wish to review. Examine the learning goals, assessment evidence, and instructional learning plan. **SUBMIT** a 1-2-page document that: • Analyzes the inclusion and clarity of desired results, evidence of attainment of results, and learning principles of the unit plan. • Identifies what you see as strengths and needed improvement of the unit plan.
Assessment	The Course Assessment Rubric will be used to assess if the module objective(s) were met. Grades and comments will be issued via the LMS

Module #3: Initial Unit Sketch	
Objective	Develop an Initial Unit Sketch using the 3 stages of backward design: Desired Results, Evidence of Achieving Goals, Learning Plan
Activities and Needed Material	Activities: Select a unit that you wish to revise or create. As relevant, consider input and/or collaboration with colleagues. Identify applicable content standards and school requirements. Develop and **SUBMIT** an initial unit sketch using the 3 stages of backward design described in *The Understanding by Design Guide to Creating High-Quality Units.* Needed Materials: *The Understanding by Design Guide to Creating High-Quality Units* and relevant content standards and district guidelines.
Assessment	The Course Assessment Rubric will be used to assess if the module objective(s) were met. Grades and comments will be issued via the LMS

Module #4: Unit Sketch Alignment	
Objective	Using a circle back approach, self-assess the alignment of the 3 stages of your design.
Activities and Needed Material	Review and revise (as needed) your current unit sketch. **SUBMIT** a written document. Address the questions below: 1. Are learning goals clearly stated? 2. Do goals give the rationale and purpose for the content? (Consider content standards and district guidelines) 3. Does the evidence align with the learning goals? 4. Does the learning plan align with the goals and evidence in assessment?
Assessment	The Course Assessment Rubric will be used to assess if the module objective(s) were met. Grades and comments will be issued via the LMS

Course Assessment Rubric:

EXCELLENT Meets or Exceeds Course Objectives: A to A-	ACCEPTABLE Majority of Work Meets Course Objectives; B+ to B-	NOT ACCEPTABLE Needs Considerable Improvement: Resubmit Work Suggested: C or below
All work submitted reflects indepth understanding of course objectives.	Most work submitted reflects indepth understanding of course objectives.	Work shows little or no in-depth understanding of course objectives.
Assignment responses show evidence of understanding backward design concepts as demonstrated by including the critical attributes in unit design and supporting narratives.	Most assignment responses show evidence of understanding backward design concepts as demonstrated by including the critical attributes in unit design and supporting narratives.	Responses show little to no evidence of **understanding** backward design concepts as demonstrated by including the critical attributes in unit design and supporting narratives.
Work submitted was organized and clearly articulated. The student carefully followed all assignment instructions. The instructor did not have to provide continual assignment clarification or request revisions.	Most work submitted was organized and clearly articulated. The student carefully followed all assignment instructions. The instructor had to provide continual assignment clarification or ask for revisions.	Work submitted was not organized or not clearly articulated. The instructor had to provide constant clarification and ask for continued revisions.
Assignment content and required projects were original.	Assignment content and required projects were original.	Evidence that not all assignment content and required projects were original.
Work is free of spelling and/or grammatical errors.	Work has few spelling and/or grammatical errors.	Work has numerous spelling and/or grammatical errors.

Resources:

The Understanding by Design Guide to Creating High-Quality Units by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe (available in most school/district or public libraries) and for purchase online.