

Climbing the Ladder to Course Success: Essential Practices for New Courses

Track: Rookie Roadmap

May 14, 2026 from 10:45a-12:15p

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TEACHx

I have no financial relationships or conflicts of interest to disclose.





Ice Melter

Please share:

1. You preferred name
2. Your role or relationship to teaching
3. On the Cat Scale 1-12, how are you feeling today?



Abstract

Designing and launching a new course can spark our pedagogical creativity while challenging us to make decisions on a tight timeline. This workshop provides practical guidance and actionable steps to help instructors confidently begin shaping a new course such as selecting texts and readings, aligning assessments with competencies, planning meaningful in-class activities, and inviting subject matter experts into the classroom.

Participants will engage in a fast-paced, collaborative environment that mirrors methods of an effective class session as they build a ladder of success towards course development. Through hands-on activities, attendees will begin developing a semester outline, identifying key learning outcomes, and creating the foundational scaffolding needed to continue building their course after the session concludes. Opportunities for dialogue with fellow instructors will encourage idea-sharing, problem-solving, and exploration of different approaches to course design.

This session is ideal for instructors preparing to teach a new course or seeking a structured, energetic approach to course planning. Attendees will leave with tangible deliverables, practical tools, and a clear plan of action to accelerate their course development with confidence.

Session Learning Objectives

1. **Analyze** the essential components of an effective new course design process.
2. **Create** a preliminary semester course outline that integrates key course components and an actionable plan for course development beyond the workshop.

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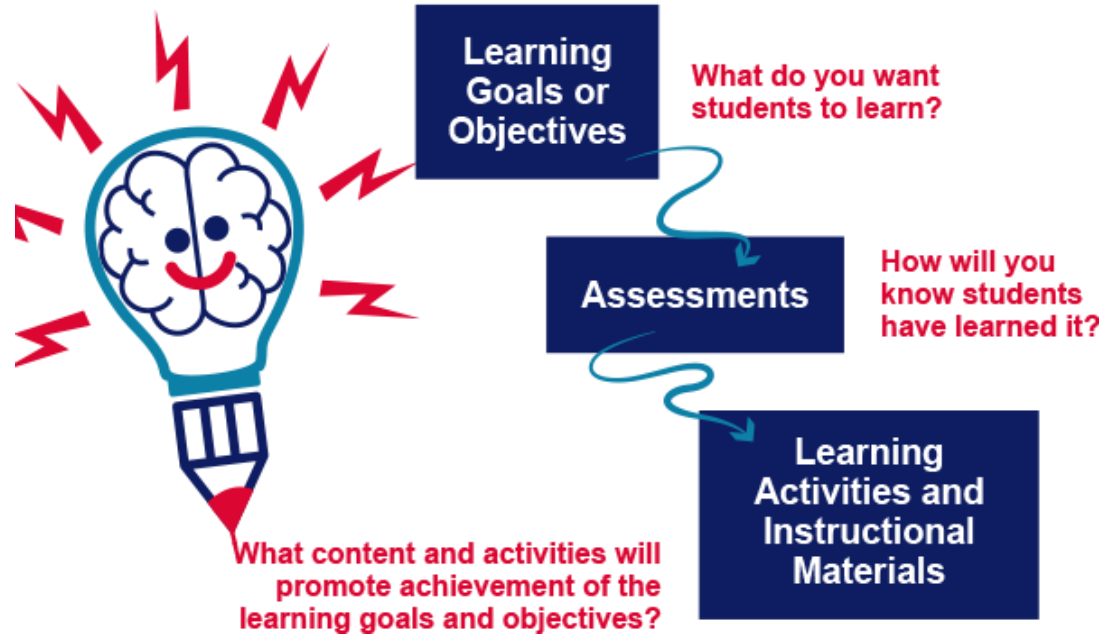
Essential Components of Course Design

Ideas based on principles of:

- Backward design
- Instructional design
- Inclusive teaching strategies

Essential Components of Course Design

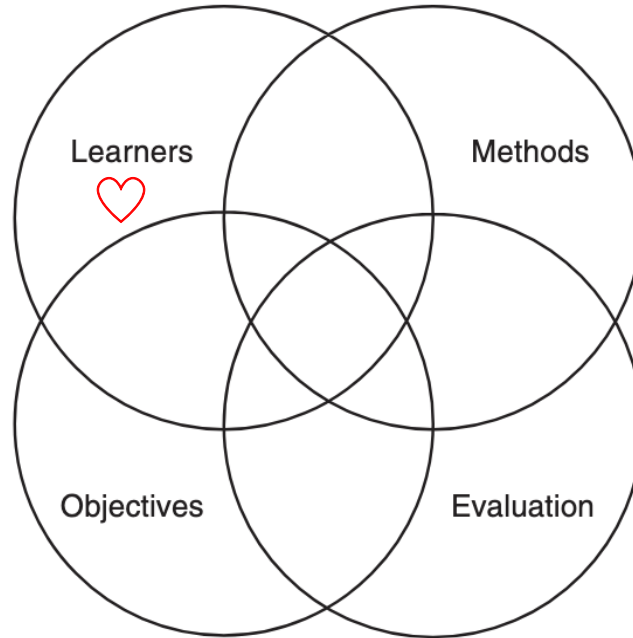
Backward Design Framework



Stapleton-Corcoran, E. (2023). Backwards design. Center for the Advancement of Teaching Excellence (CATE), University of Illinois Chicago. <https://teaching.uic.edu/resources/teaching-guides/learning-principles-and-frameworks/backward-design/>

Essential Components of Course Design

Fundamental components of Instructional Design



Morrison, G. R., Ross, S. M., Kalman, H. K., & Kemp, J. E. (2013). Chapter 1: Introduction to the Instructional Design Process. Overview of Our Design Model. Figure 1-2, page 14. The Fundamental Components of Instructional Design. Designing Effective Instruction (7th ed). Wiley.

Essential Components of Course Design

Inclusive Teaching Strategies

"...inclusive teaching involves designing learning environments that are (a) equitable, where all students have the opportunity to reach their potential, and (b) welcoming, and foster a sense of belonging."

Addy, T. M., Dube, D., Mitchell, K. A., & SoRelle, M. (2021). What inclusive instructors do: Principles and practices for excellence in college teaching. Stylus Publishing.

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Think-Pair-Share



Think–Pair–Share (5-minutes each)

1. **Elevator Pitch** (60-second Course Description)
2. **Weekly Activities**
 - a) Have the end in mind; when students leave this course, they will be able to...
 - b) Think of the topics for the initial weeks, mid-course, and end-of-the semester.
3. **Student Assignments**
 - a) How can students demonstrate what they've learned at the halfway point? By the end of the course?
 - b) What graded and non-graded assessments work for the course?
4. **Plan for Evaluating Student Work**
 - a) What is important to include in the evaluation of student work?
 - b) How will grading [rubrics](#) be helpful?
5. **Plan for Evaluating Course Success**
 - a) What will help you feel like you accomplished your course mission?

Think–Pair–Share (Debrief)

1. What aspects of the course do you feel most confident about?
2. What do you see as the biggest hurdle?
3. Work together to brainstorm strategies to leverage strengths while addressing the hurdles.

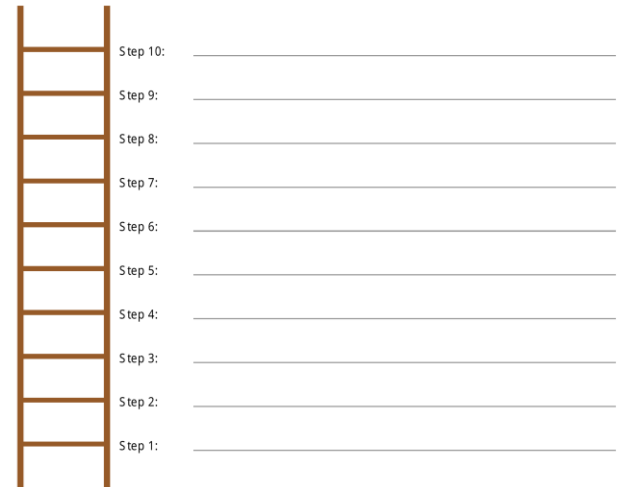
Build-A-Ladder



Build-a-Ladder Worksheet

Build-A-Ladder Worksheet

Main Course Development Goal:



Step 10: _____

Step 9: _____

Step 8: _____

Step 7: _____

Step 6: _____

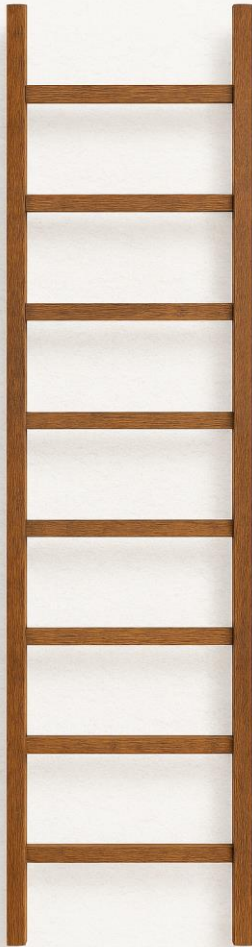
Step 5: _____

Step 4: _____

Step 3: _____

Step 2: _____

Step 1: _____



Build-a-Ladder

Main Course Development Goal (examples)

15-Week
Course
Schedule

Student
Assignments

Plan for
Evaluating
Student
Work

Plan for
Evaluating
Course
Success

Build-a-Ladder Fillable Worksheet



<https://uofi.box.com/v/BuildALadder>

UIC UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS CHICAGO
School of Public Health

Build-A-Ladder Worksheet

Main Course Development Goal:

15-week course schedule/weekly activities

Step 10:	
Step 9:	
Step 8:	
Step 7:	
Step 6:	
Step 5:	Develop 3 in class activities around foundational framework
Step 4:	Midterm and final course assessment
Step 3:	Select textbook or 4 course readings
Step 2:	Identify subject-matter experts for week 4 and 9
Step 1:	Map the course schedule to the academic calendar

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Grab Bag



Grab Bag



**Ice-Melters
or
Fire-Starters**

**Selecting
course texts
and readings**

**Best practices
for engaging
subject-matter
experts**

**Free-for-all!
Any nuggets of
teaching you
want to share!**

1. Grab an index card.
2. Address each topic separately.
3. Add only one idea on each index card related to the topic.
4. Drop card(s) in the bag.
5. Once the cards are ready, each group member pulls a card.
6. Discuss with your group how to implement the ideas.

Name Your Final Thoughts and Wishes

Choose one!



HELLO
my name is

1. Name one thing you'll take with you from today.
2. Name one thing you'll share with your colleagues.
3. Name one thing you want to explore more.

References & Resources

- Addy, T. M., Dube, D., Mitchell, K. A., & SoRelle, M. (2021). What inclusive instructors do: Principles and practices for excellence in college teaching. Stylus Publishing.
- McCay, M. (2026, May). [Build-a-ladder worksheet and fillable form](#) [Worksheet]. University of Illinois Chicago, School of Public Health.
- Morrison, G. R., Ross, S. M., Kalman, H. K., & Kemp, J. E. (2013). Chapter 1: Introduction to the Instructional Design Process. Overview of Our Design Model. Figure 1-2, page 14. The Fundamental Components of Instructional Design. Designing Effective Instruction (7th ed). Wiley.
- Stapleton-Corcoran, E. (2023). Backwards design. [Center for the Advancement of Teaching Excellence](#), University of Illinois Chicago.
- Stevens, D., Dyer, S., & Jamie Chriqui. (2024). [UIC SPH Teaching and Learning Guide](#) (1st ed.).



QR Code for UIC SPH T&L Guide

Thank You!

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