# Planning Assignments & Activities

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| Step 1 – Visioning (5 Minutes)Designing an online course is an opportunity to consider (or reconsider) the “big picture” aspects of your course. Use the following prompts to find inspiration and connect with what is most important for your course, your teaching, and the student experience.  |
| **Enduring Ideas and/or Essential Questions**What aspirations do you have for your students? In the space below, begin drafting enduring ideas and/or essential questions. These statements typically frame a lesson, unit, or course and are often revisited. Enduring Ideas are statements that are central to a unit of study and have lasting value beyond the classroom. Essential Questions are provocative questions that help to foster inquiry, focus attention, and support the transfer of learning.  |
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| Your ideal online courseWhat characteristics of an educational experience are most important to you? Use the space below to write words or ideas that describe your ideal online course. |
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| Assignments and/or activities What words or ideas best describe your intention for *student activities* in your online course?  |
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| Step 2 - Goals & Objectives (5 Minutes)In this section, you will have the opportunity to work through a systematic process that starts with goals/objectives and ends with a fully elaborated assignment plan that will engage your online learners and support key ideas for your course.  |
| TopicIdentify a topic from your course. This can be a lesson, lecture, unit, module, chapter, etc.  |
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| **Learning Objectives**In Section 1, you outlined enduring ideas and essential questions that articulate the aspirations you have for your students. As you narrow your focus to this specific unit of instruction, draft a couple actionable and measurable statements that describe what a student will know or be able to do at the conclusion of this topic. Pay special attention to the verbs you use because these are what help shape the experience and activities.  |
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| **Step 3 - Acceptable Evidence (5 Minutes)**As we focus in on this specific unit of instruction, consider what evidence you will need to determine a student’s proficiency with respect to the objectives above. |
| **Demonstration of proficiency**At the conclusion of a unit of study, what evidence will you need to assess a student’s proficiency relative to the objective(s) above? Use the space below to itemize behaviors, skills, attitudes, and/or knowledge will you need to observe.  |
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| Step 4 - Content (5 Minutes) |
| **What will students read & explore?**List books, articles, and other written material that will support your learning objectives for this module. |
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| **What will students view or hear?**List audio, video, images, and other multimedia resources that will support the learning objectives for this module.  |
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| Step 5 - Activity Design As noted in the article by [Henry & Meadows (2008)](https://app.box.com/embed/s/6pdnmvlkmcztktqj3bdcfxcx3xjq3fjo?view=list&sortColumn=date&sortDirection=ASC&showItemFeedActions=true&showParentPath=true), online is a medium unto itself. This section will prompt you with questions that help you create, adapt and/or reimagine a fully realized activity that engages students and works seamlessly in an online format.  |
| **Title of Activity** |
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| **Purpose**Provide a short description of what students will do and how the activity supports a learning objective for this unit. |
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| **What will your presence or role as an instructor be in this activity? Describe your role.**(e.g. active facilitating, debating, grading/feedback) |
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| **Logistics**Begin to sketch out how you might implement this activity in an online course. Consider what kind of instructions, preparation, and materials a student will need to be successful. |
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| **What are your concerns or unanswered questions?**  |
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| Overview of Collaborative Learning Techniques**Source**: Barkley, E. F., Major, C. H., & Cross, K. P. (2014). *Collaborative Learning Techniques: a Handbook for College Faculty*. San Francisco: Wiley-Blackwell. |
| **Discussion** |
|  | **Students will….** | **Purpose:** |
| **1 Think-Pair-Share** | Think individually for a few minutes and then discuss and compare their responses with a partner before sharing with the entire class. | Preparing students to participate more fully and effectively in whole class discussions. |
| **2 Round Robin** | Generate ideas and speak in order moving from one student to the next | Structuring brainstorming sessions and ensuring that all students participate. |
| **3 Buzz Groups** | Discuss course-related questions informally in small groups of peers | Generating lots of information and ideas in a short period of time to prepare for and improve whole-class discussions |
| **4 Talking Chips** | Participate in a group discussion and surrender a token each time they speak | Ensuring equitable participation. |
| **5 Three-Step-Interview** | Interview each other and report what they learn to another pair | Helping students network and improve communication skills |
| **6 Critical Debates** | Assume and argue the side of an issue that is in opposition to their personal views. | Developing critical thinking skills and encouraging students to challenge their existing assumptions |
| **Reciprocal Peer Teaching**  |
|  | **Students will….** | **Purpose:** |
| **7 Note-Taking Pairs** | Pool information from their individual notes to create an improved, partner version. | Helping students acquire missing information and correct inaccuracies in their notes and learn to become better note takers. |
| **8 Learning Cell** | Quiz each other using questions they have developed individually about a reading assignment or other learning activity. | Engaging students actively in thinking about content and encouraging them to challenge each other to pursue deeper levels of thought. |
| **9 Fishbowl** | Form concentric circles with the smaller, inside group discussing and the larger, outside group listening and observing | Providing opportunities for students to model or observe group processes in a discussion setting. |
| **10 Role-Play** | Assume a different identity and act out a scenario. | Engaging students in a creative way that helps them learn by doing. |
| **11 Jigsaw** | Develop knowledge about a given topic and then teach it to others. | Motivating students to learn and process information deeply enough to teach it to their peers |
| **12 Test-Taking Teams** | Prepare for a test in working groups, take the test individually, and then retake the test in their groups | Helping students assess and improve their understanding of subject matter as they also teach each other test-taking strategies  |
| **Problem-Solving** |
|  | **Students will….** | **Purpose:** |
| **13 Think-Aloud Pair**  **Problem-Solving** | Solve problems aloud to try out their reasoning on a listening peer. | Emphasizing the problem-solving process (rather than the product) and helping students identify logic or process errors. |
| **14 Send-a-Problem** | Try to solve a problem as a group and then pass the problem and solution to a nearby group who does the same; the final group evaluates the solutions. | Helping students practice together the thinking skills required for effective problem-solving and for comparing and discriminating between multiple solutions. |
| **15 Case Studies** | Review a written study of a real-world scenario and develop a solution to the dilemma presented in the case. | Presenting abstract principles and theories in ways that students find relevant.  |
| **16 Structured Problem**  **Solving** | Follow a structured format to solve problems. | Dividing problem-solving processes into manageable steps so that students don’t feel overwhelmed and so that they learn to identify, analyze, and solve problems in an organized manner. |
| **17 Analytic Teams** | Assume roles and tasks to perform when critically reading, listening, viewing. Roles focus on the analytic process rather than the group process. | Help students understand the different activities that constitute a critical analysis.  |
| **18 Group Investigation** | Plan, conduct, and report on in-depth research projects | Teaching students research procedures and helping them to gain in-depth knowledge about a specific area. |
| **Graphic Organizing** |
|  | **Students will….** | **Purpose:** |
| **19 Affinity Grouping** | Generate ideas, identify common themes, and then sort and organize the ideas accordingly | Unpack a complicated topic and identify and classify its constituent parts |
| **20 Group Grid** | Are given pieces of information and asked to place them in the blank cells of a grid according to category rubrics. | Clarify conceptual categories and develop sorting skills |
| **21 Team Matrix** | Discriminate between similar concepts by noticing and marking on a chart the presence or absence of important, defining features | Distinguish between closely related concepts |
| **22 Sequence Chains** | Analyze and depict graphically a series of events, actions, roles, or decisions | Understand processes, cause and effect, and chronological series, and organize information in an orderly, coherent progression. |
| **23 Word Webs** | Generate a list of related ideas and then organize them in a graphic, identifying relationships by drawing lines or arrows to represent the connections | Figure out and represent relationships. Like maps, they can show both the destination and the sites and sights along the way.  |
| **Writing** |
|  | **Students will….** | **Purpose:** |
| **24 Dialogue Journals** | Record their thoughts in a journal that they exchange with peers for comments and questions. | Connect coursework to their personal lives and to interact with each other in content-related and thoughtful ways |
| **25 Round Table** | Take turns responding to a prompt by writing one or two words, phrases, or sentences before passing the paper along to others who do the same. | Practice writing informally and to create a written record of ideas |
| **26 Dyadic Essays** | Write essay questions and model answers for each other, exchange questions, and after responding compare their answers to the model answer. | Identify the most important feature of a learning activity and formulate and answer questions about that activity.  |
| **27 Peer Editing** | Critically review and provide editorial feedback on a peer’s essay, report, argument, research paper, or other writing assignment.  | Develop critical editing skills and give each other constructive criticism to improve papers before they submit them for grading. |
| **28 Collaborative Writing** | Write a formal paper together. | Learn and perform the stages of writing more effectively. |
| **29 Team Anthologies** | Develop a compilation of course-related readings with student reactions to the material. | Experience the research process without writing a formal research paper. |
| **30 Paper Seminar** | Write and then present an original paper, receive formal feedback from selected peers, and engage in a general discussion of the issues in the paper with the entire group.  | Engage in deep discussion about their research and provide individual students with focused attention and feedback on individual students’ work.  |
| **Games** |
|  | **Students will….** | **Purpose:** |
| **31 Team Scavenger**  **Hunt** | Find a set of items on a list. | Introducing students to key artifacts and physical and visual examples associated with course content. |
| **32 Quizo** | Answer questions correctly to receive a chip to place on a board as they strive to cover five sequential spaces | Introducing or reviewing factual content. |
| **33 Team Jeopardy** | Choose categories and point values to receive an answer for which they supply the question | Requiring students to think about content in new ways by supplying the question rather than the answer. |
| **34 Friendly Feud** | Provide multiple correct answers to a prompt question | Helping students to understand that there can be multiple answers to a question and that those answers can be more or less correct. |
| **35 Team Games**  **Tournaments** | Work in heterogeneous teams to learn content and compete in homogeneous teams to earn points for the home team. | Helping assess student mastery of a specific body of content. |

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| Step 6 - Weekly Rhythm |
| **How might this activity fit into a weekly sequence?**  |
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# Weekly Rhythm Diagram

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Day 1** | **Day 2** | **Day 3** | **Day 4** | **Day 5** | **Day 6** | **Day 7** |
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# Example #1 Weekly Rhythm Diagram

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|  | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
| **Introduction** | Organize your week. View the intro video and objectives.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Reading**  | Complete readings as outlined on the readings page of the module. |  |  |  |  |
| **Quiz** | Complete weekly quiz by Wednesday at 11:59 PM |  |  |  |  |
| **Content Exploration & Discussion** |  |  | **All:** Forum opens Wednesday. Make initial individual post Thursday at 11:59 PM.  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | **All:** Respond to three peers by Saturday at 11:59 AM. |  |
| **Lecture**  | Lecture material is available all week.  |  |  |
| **Response Paper** |  |  |  |  |  | Response Paper OPENS 6am Sat; due Sun at 11:59 AM.  |

# Example #2 Weekly Rhythm Diagram

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Sun  | Mon | Tu  | Wed | Th | Fri | Sat |
| **Introduction** | Listen to the introductory podcast and review announcements. |  |
| **Readings** | Complete the weekly readings as listed on the week’s homepage. |  |
| **Lectures** | Listen to each of the podcast lectures for the week (~120 minutes).  |  |
| **Discussion** | Post an original response to the weekly discussion prompt post by **noon on Thursday**. | Respond to TA’s post by **midnight Saturday.** |
| **Vote** |  | Vote for best post in your discussion group. |
| **Q&A Forum**  | Ask any questions on topics from the lecture podcasts, clarification on assignments, and/or course structure in the forum. |  |
| **Weekly Quiz** |  | Complete the quiz anytime before 11:59 PM Saturday. Grades will be available on Sunday. |
| **Essay**  | Reflect on how the material for this week. Ask questions and plan ahead to ensure you are on track to complete the paper by the due date. |
| **Wrap Up** |  | View the weekly wrap up message. |

# Course Map

**Note:** The course map is a rough draft of what you are considering planning for your entire course. It is a fluid document since what you are planning will most likely change throughout the planning phase. Feel free to make changes as you continue through this process and consider new resources or realize that you have too many and need to cut down to focus on what is really important.

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|  | **Unit Topic** | **Big Ideas & Essential Questions** | **Goals & Objectives** | **Acceptable Evidence** | **Content** | **Activities** |
|  | *List main topics or chunks of content that organize and connect your course elements.* | *What big idea or questions should students focus on?* | *What is the desired result of instruction?* *At the end of this unit, students will be able to:*  | *What is acceptable evidence that students achieved the objectives?**I will know students have achieved the learning objectives because they will successfully:* | *What resources or information will be provided?* | *How will student engage with the content and interact with other students to prepare for (or complete) the assessment?* *What opportunities for practice and exploration are provided?* |
|  | units, modules, weeks, chapters, projects, papers, case studies, essential questions, etc. | What are the key ideas you want students to learn and remember after completing this unit?What is worth understanding? What is not necessary and can be eliminated?  | Consider the level you want student to achieve:- Remember- Understand- Apply- Analyze- Evaluate- Create | self-checks, quizzes, exams, essay questions, writing assignments, papers, reports, case studies, projects, speeches, presentations, discussion questions, peer feedback, portfolios, concept maps, etc. | readings, videos, audio, texts, internet sources, charts, diagrams, pictures, blogs, lectures, overviews, stories, PowerPoints, assignment directions, policies, guides, instructions, guest speakers, demonstrations.  | role playing, assignments, simulations, learning scenarios, problem sets, projects, research, virtual tours/labs, brainstorming, debates, educational games, discussions, etc.,  |

# Course Map Template

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Unit Topic | Big Ideas & Essential Questions | Goals & Objectives | Acceptable Evidence | Content | Activities |
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