
Guiding Questions for Curriculum Redesign

Graduate Programs in Education
College of Professional Studies
Northeastern University

Students

- Who are your students now? What are their strengths and challenges, motivations and goals coming into your program? How do you know?
- What does your program look like from the student's perspective right now? What meaning are they making of your program? How do you know?
- If you asked your students to document and reflect upon their learning in an ePortfolio, what do you think they would do with it?
- How is this similar or different from what you hope they would do with it?

Your Program or Institution

- If you encountered one of your ideal graduates in the context of work or a job interview, what would be their distinguishing characteristics?
- What contributions are you preparing students to make to society and/or to their profession?
- What expertise, abilities, and characteristics will the graduates of your program need to be able to make these contributions?

Curriculum

- What experiences and types of engagement would help students develop the expertise, abilities, and characteristics you envision for them?
- How can this work be clustered into themes, courses, and a sequence that scaffolds this development? How will the courses be connected?
- What signature assignments (products of work) will provide authentic evidence of this development? How will that work be connected?

Courses

- What do you know about your incoming students (e.g., motivations, goals, prior coursework, major assignments that they did for other classes)? What opportunities do students have to bring their learning from other courses into their learning experience with you?
- What outcomes do you envision for your students? Will they have an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of the experience and the quality of their work as it relates to course outcomes? ... as it relates to program competencies? ... as it relates to their own motivation and goals?
- When your class is over, will they have something meaningful that they could, and would want to, share with others?

Definitions

Competencies and Outcomes: All learning involves change, the development of knowledge, skills, perspectives, insights, dispositions, and capabilities. Competencies and outcomes are an effort to describe these changes.

The definitions of these two terms are not codified. For the purpose of this handout, program-level *competencies* describe generalized expertise, abilities, and characteristics exhibited in an exemplary graduate. Course-level *outcomes* are specific and measurable descriptions of what a student will know and be able to do.

Signature Assignments: Coursework guides student development in relationship to outcomes and competencies. Each course includes a signature assignment designed to evidence students' progress. The assignments are authentic (real to the profession), foster linkages between courses, and engage students in the development of a portfolio of meaningful work.

ePortfolio: A purposefully selected body of signature work that, when viewed in conjunction with the author's reflections, represents progress toward competencies. It is in a digital and linked format, designed to foster engagement and connected learning.

ePortfolio Links

- Connect to Learning Project
<http://c2l.mcnrc.org> (opens 1/23/14)

- CPS M.Ed. Program Resources
<http://tinyurl.com/Northeastern-eP>