

Curriculum Maps

As I noted previously, the [assessment process](#) begins with an identification of the program's goals and/or purpose and then the student learning outcomes. After the outcomes have been identified, the learning activities that are intended to provide the learning experiences that allow students to meet the outcomes are identified. The reason for this step is that it provides a proactive check to make sure that sufficient activities have been included to meet the learning outcomes, and it provides some information about where and when assessment methods might be used. One method of documenting this is to construct a curriculum map.

Curriculum maps have been used in education for a long time. The purpose of a curriculum map is to document the intended relationship between components of the curriculum. Used as an analysis tool, a curriculum map allows instructors to review the curriculum to check for unnecessary redundancies, inconsistencies, misalignments, weaknesses and gaps.

As typically used within an assessment plan, a curriculum map is used to document the relationships between the required components of the curriculum and the intended student learning outcomes. Constructed in a matrix format, these maps are useful for identifying assessment points within the academic program. This is especially useful for departments that want to use a [course-embedded assessment](#) process. Later, the map can be used to link educational experiences, student learning outcomes and assessment methods.

When I started at Morningside, I developed a curriculum map to help acquaint myself with the new curriculum. My map documents the relationships between the new curriculum's graduation requirements and the Morningside Eight Student Learning Outcomes. I have posted the map (which I call a matrix) on the OAIR website [here](#).

Next time: Selecting Assessment Methods