

# Curriculum Mapping

Office of Academic Planning & Assessment



Sam Houston  
State University

# What is curriculum mapping?

- **Curriculum mapping:** A systematic process to document and visualize student learning at a higher level, identifying gaps and redundancies, and affording an opportunity to align a program's learning outcomes with that of an institution (Archambault & Masunaga, 2015)
- **Curriculum map:** A consideration of when, how, and what is taught, as well as the assessment measures utilized to explain achievement of expected student learning outcomes (Harden, 2001)





# How does curriculum mapping support our work?

- Aids in curriculum planning and design
- Improves communication about curriculum among faculty
- Improves program coherence
- Helps identify key student learning outcomes and any gaps in outcomes coverage
- Increases the likelihood that students achieve program-level outcomes
- Helps identify areas for programmatic assessment of student learning



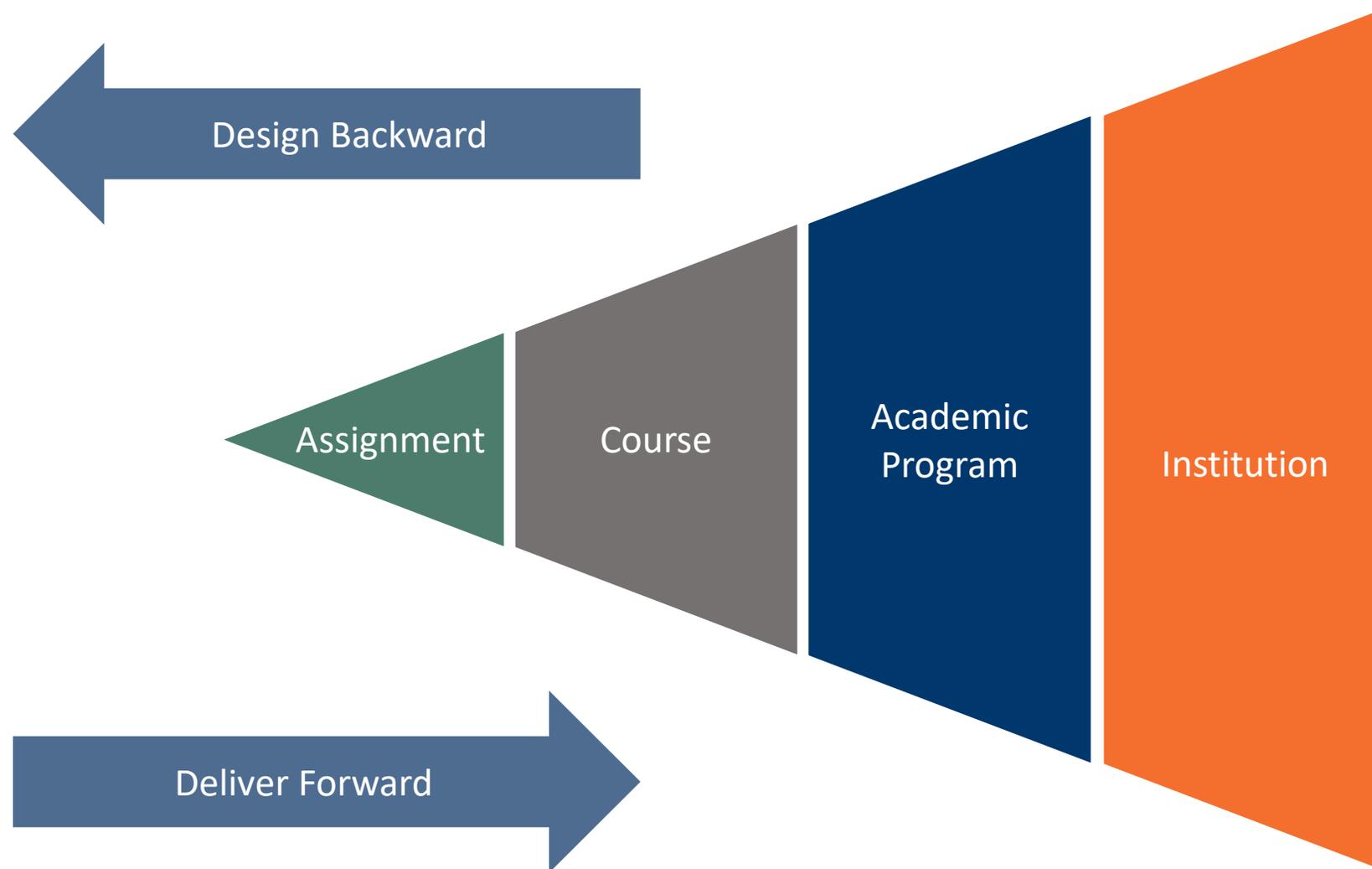
# Levels of Curriculum Mapping

- Assignment-level
  - Mapping an assignment to a specific student learning outcome (SLO)
- Course-level
  - Mapping specific SLOs across an entire course
- **Program-level**
  - Mapping specific SLOs across an entire degree program or course of study
- Institutional-level
  - Mapping specific SLOs across an entire university curriculum

*Note: Levels of assessment align with levels of curriculum mapping (assignment, course, program, and institutional).*



# Designing & Delivering the Curriculum: Intended Outcomes



# Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

- All curriculum mapping (and academic assessment) starts with SLOs. Mapping and assessment are not possible without clearly defined outcomes.
- Student learning outcomes are “...the expected student learning or behavior in precise terms, providing guidance for what needs to be assessed” (Banta & Palomba, 2015, p. 66).
- Programmatic student learning outcomes are the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities gained by students through the course of their degree programs. They should be able to successfully demonstrate these outcomes by graduation.





# Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

- A **good** SLO should:
  - not be overly broad or generic
  - detail the specific knowledge or skill the students are expected to demonstrate
  - be stated in a way that can be conceivably measured
- Examples of SLOs that **need improvement**:
  - Students will demonstrate a mastery of all knowledge necessary for the discipline.
  - Students will get an A in EDLD 6345: Research Methods.
  - Students will successfully defend their dissertations.

# Example Curriculum Map

	UBAW 1330	UBAW 1620	UBAW 2680	UBAW 2290	UBAW 3302	UBAW 3420	UBAW 3842	UBAW 4280	UBAW 4460
SLO #1	Introduced		Reinforced					Mastered	
SLO #2		Introduced			Reinforced		Reinforced	Mastered	Mastered
SLO #3			Reinforced						Mastered
SLO #4	Introduced	Introduced		Reinforced			Reinforced		Mastered
SLO #5								Mastered	
SLO #6	Introduced			Reinforced					
SLO #7		Introduced							Mastered
SLO #8	Introduced				Reinforced			Mastered	
SLO #9									
SLO #10				Introduced			Reinforced		



# Curriculum Map Characteristics

- SLOs identified along one axis
- Programmatic course offerings / course sequence along the other axis
- Areas where SLOs are incorporated into specific courses
  - Many maps will have levels of emphasis (e.g., Introduced, Reinforced, Mastered).

	UBAW 1330	UBAW 1620	UBAW 2680	UBAW 2290	UBAW 3302	UBAW 3420	UBAW 3842	UBAW 4280	UBAW 4460
SLO #1	Introduced		Reinforced					Mastered	
SLO #2		Introduced			Reinforced		Reinforced	Mastered	Mastered
SLO #3			Reinforced						Mastered
SLO #4	Introduced	Introduced		Reinforced			Reinforced		Mastered
SLO #5								Mastered	
SLO #6	Introduced			Reinforced					
SLO #7		Introduced							Mastered
SLO #8	Introduced				Reinforced			Mastered	
SLO #9									
SLO #10				Introduced			Reinforced		



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# Finding Gaps

- Maps help identify:
  - programmatic SLOs that are not being covered within the curriculum. (Ex: SLO #9)
  - programmatic SLOs that may be inadequately addressed (Ex: SLOs #3, #5, #7, #10)
  - courses that are not covering any of the programmatic SLOs (Ex: UBAW 3420)

	UBAW 1330	UBAW 1620	UBAW 2680	UBAW 2290	UBAW 3302	UBAW 3420	UBAW 3842	UBAW 4280	UBAW 4460
SLO #1	Introduced		Reinforced					Mastered	
SLO #2		Introduced			Reinforced		Reinforced	Mastered	Mastered
SLO #3			Reinforced						Mastered
SLO #4	Introduced	Introduced		Reinforced			Reinforced		Mastered
SLO #5								Mastered	
SLO #6	Introduced			Reinforced					
SLO #7		Introduced							Mastered
SLO #8	Introduced				Reinforced			Mastered	
SLO #9									
SLO #10				Introduced			Reinforced		



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# Revised Example Curriculum Map

The map now shows that all courses are covering SLOs, and all SLOs are being addressed adequately within the curriculum.

	UBAW 1330	UBAW 1620	UBAW 2680	UBAW 2290	UBAW 3302	UBAW 3420	UBAW 3842	UBAW 4280	UBAW 4460
SLO #1	Introduced		Reinforced		Reinforced	Reinforced		Mastered	
SLO #2		Introduced			Reinforced		Reinforced	Mastered	Mastered
SLO #3	Introduced		Reinforced		Reinforced	Reinforced		Mastered	Mastered
SLO #4	Introduced	Introduced		Reinforced			Reinforced		Mastered
SLO #5		Introduced			Reinforced	Reinforced		Mastered	
SLO #6	Introduced			Reinforced	Reinforced	Reinforced		Mastered	
SLO #7		Introduced	Reinforced				Reinforced		Mastered
SLO #8	Introduced		Reinforced		Reinforced	Reinforced		Mastered	
SLO #9	Introduced			Reinforced			Reinforced		Mastered
SLO #10		Introduced		Reinforced			Reinforced		Mastered





# Reflection: Curriculum Mapping

- Does your program curriculum have a design?
- Do you have a clear sequence of courses through which students progress?
  - Is the course sequence addressing all the program SLOs?
- Can students pick and choose from a menu of multiple courses?
  - How are you ensuring students are mastering all the program SLOs?
- Do you have outside accreditation requirements or professional standards impacting your curriculum?

# Reflection: Assessment

- Does your program have outside accreditation requirements or professional standards driving program assessment?
- What type of assessment are you interested in?
  - Formative, Summative, Pre/Post Assessment, etc.
- Do you want to use course-embedded assessment, artifact sampling, or a mixture?
- What assessments do you already have in place?
- Are the current assessments in the right places within the curriculum?





# Identifying the Best Areas for Assessing SLOs

- Look for the intersections between courses and SLOs.
  - These intersections represent potential points for embedded assessment or artifact collection.
- Identify areas where different levels of learning can be assessed.
  - This allows you to conduct formative/summative assessment.
  - It also allows you to conduct assessment at the appropriate level.
- Reflect and determine:
  - Are course-level data for these outcomes already available?
  - Are student learning artifacts available that could be used for programmatic evaluation? (papers, projects, assignments, etc.)
  - Could new assessments be introduced to evaluate attainment of programmatic SLOs?



# Takeaways

- Curriculum mapping can help programs organize learning outcomes.
- It can be used to help design and implement an effective assessment plan.
- It is not a magic bullet; it takes some effort.
- It must be faculty-driven. Program faculty should collectively determine:
  - the appropriate course/program-level student learning outcomes
  - what should be taught within courses and how the curriculum should be structured
  - what should be assessed, when it should be assessed, and how
  - what actions for improvement should be taken in response to collected student data



# Questions?

Visit our website:

<https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-planning-and-assessment/assessment>

Contact our team via email:

[assessment@shsu.edu](mailto:assessment@shsu.edu)





# References

- Archambault, S. G., & Masunaga, J. (2015). Curriculum mapping as a strategic planning tool. *Journal of Library Administration*, 55(6), 503-519.
- Banta, T. W., & Palomba, C. A. (2015). *Assessment essentials: Planning, implementing, and improving assessment in higher education* (2nd ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Harden, R. M. (2001). Guide No. 21: Curriculum mapping: A tool for transparent and authentic teaching and learning. *Med Teach*, 23, 123-137.