

RATIONALES FOR CURRICULUM DOCUMENTATION & MAPPING

Why should we document and map our curriculum? Why do we need to collect and analyze student work for evidence of what has been learned? Circle the rationale(s) you find most compelling. Discuss.

1. Because we need to have a shared understanding of the whole of our educational practices and content. That requires seeing it, analyzing it and making ongoing decisions about it. Curriculum Mapping software makes for robust analytics.
2. Because evidence of the operating curriculum helps us all understand what we are accountable for and what we can count on each other for.
3. Because we need to connect to one another interdisciplinarily. That requires that we can see the scope, sequence and pacing of each other's units and courses. We can see what the curriculum looks like from our students' point of view.
4. Because we need to scaffold, build on and reinforce one another's work laterally and vertically. That requires being familiar with one another's work.
5. Because we want to foster creativity AND continuity and mapping helps us to balance both.
6. Because we need to know on an ongoing basis the extent to which we are meeting and/or exceeding the standards we have set for ourselves (or the standards that have been set for us). That requires that we design and assess for them.
7. Because people come and go (staff/administrative turn-over)—but the curriculum is a Commons and should remain and evolve so it develops over time as an elegant integrated “whole system” and becomes more and more seamless, robust, reinforcing and effective. (Faculty's intellectual property can be protected under Creative Commons Licensing.)
8. Because mapping provides an historical archive of the evolution of our curriculum and instructional practices which is useful for action research, decision making and reflection.
9. Because Understanding By Design (backwards design) and writing it all down makes us better educators. “I am beginning to understand what Education for Sustainability is.” “I am beginning to understand what education is.” This requires thinking through our rationale for what we are planning, what and how we are teaching and what we are assessing. Less time is wasted, so more time can be devoted to learning. We are leaders. People will want to learn from us.
10. Because we need formative and summative evidence of what has been learned (student work analysis), so we can read the feedback, reflect on it, learn from it and improve our practice and student learning continuously.

Designing excellent curriculum with the future in mind produces excellent student learning and performance and is congruent with designing communities for the future we want. By design we meet our standards, we contribute to sustainable communities and we are prepared to reach for our full individual and collective potential and that of the living systems upon which our lives depend.

