 

**Adult Career Pathways**

**Course Design**

**GUIDELINES**

**And**

**TEMPLATE**

(for independent use)

**Adult Career Pathways Course Design GUIDELINES**

**Introduction**

Use this document in conjunction with *Adult Career Pathways Course Design* ***Template***, provided here as an appendix to the *Guidelines.*

**Purpose**

This document is intended to guide a systematic process of designing and documenting adult career pathway courses.

**Rationale**

Often ABE instructors with little training or experience in curriculum development are asked to design and deliver career pathway courses, perhaps with minimal guidance and limited time. These Guidelines and the accompanying template equip instructors / curriculum writers with the necessary tools to design a high-quality course for their own program that can in turn be easily shared with other programs planning to deliver a similar course.

**Impact**

Well-designed courses lead to more effective teaching and increased student learning. Well-documented courses are more readily available for use by other ABE instructors and programs. In a field where resources are limited, sharing and avoiding duplication are critical.

**Use**

This document may be used independently by any ABE professional tasked with designing a career pathway course. (It has also been used to guide the work of a six-month Minnesota ABE training cohort.)

It can be used to design a new course from scratch. It has also proven a useful guide for documenting and organizing an existing course.

It is recommended to follow the ten steps in order. Course design is an ongoing process; each step should be revisited on a regular basis and revised based on experience teaching the course.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Work with the *Guidelines* and the *Template* documents side-by-side at all times. Everything you need to complete each step in the *Template* is in the *Guidelines*.

All content generated in this course design process is intended for use by *instructors* to guide program planning and instruction (except the student syllabus, which is of course a document for the *students*).

**Advice from the field**

Instructors who have completed this course design process share their advice:

* Do solid work on your *objectives*, then stay focused on those. It is so easy to keep chasing more material, all possible content and activities, but the goal is to guide student learning to meet the course objectives.
* Set aside a couple hours each week for your course design work. Otherwise it can take up too much time and get overwhelming.
* If you are designing a career pathway course with content that is unfamiliar to you (child development? food safety? truck driving?), don’t worry! As you learn the material yourself, you can reflect on your own process of mastering the content and skills, which in turn can inform how you guide students who are themselves novices in the career field.
* Ask a lot of questions. Seek help if you need it, from within your program, from content experts, from ABE colleagues and from professional development sources in Minnesota ABE.
* Recognize that course design is a process of constant revision. If you are designing a new course, you will have plenty of changes once you start to teach it.
* The *Guidelines* and *Template* help you stick with the steps and stay focused.
* Be sure to tap the ATLAS Adult Career Pathways online curriculum resource library - <https://atlasabe.org/resources/acp/>. It has a wealth of great material, sometimes in unexpected places. This becomes a huge time saver, especially when you get to creating instructional materials.

**Reflection**

*“Pulling all the pieces together in a systematic way allows me to prepare well for the students’ learning experience, which of course is the whole point. Also, the course design document becomes a curriculum that can be shared with other ABE professionals, who in turn should be able to pick it up and in minimal time prepare and teach the course in another program.” –* Bill Crozier, Southeast ABE, Winona, 2018-19 cohort participant

**Glossary**

A helpful glossary of 50 terms related to adult career pathways work is available on the ATLAS website - see <https://atlasabe.org/resource/adult-career-pathways-glossary/>

**Steps in the Course Design Process**

1. Course summary
2. Source materials
3. Course review
4. Course objectives
5. Standards alignment
6. Assessment
7. Scope & sequence
8. Student syllabus
9. Instructional materials
10. Teacher notes
11. **Course Summary**

**Purpose**

* Summarize key information about your ACP course that provides clarity both within your own program and for others who may use your course curriculum.
* Identify aspects of the course that you still need to clarify within your program and how you will do that.

**Guidelines**

1. The course summary is intended to provide clarity among all staff and partners involved with your ACP course. It is also a useful summary for others outside your program considering your course curriculum for possible use in their own program. It should be two pages – an easy-to-read overview of the course.
2. As you begin your course design process, complete all the information that you currently know. That may be very little to start – not to worry!
3. Meet with your supervisor, the previous instructor of the course or others to gather the information you need. This process can be very helpful in clarifying things within your program.
4. Note “TBD” (to be determined) or UNKNOWN for any information not yet decided. Make a plan for how and when you will gather or determine the information you do not yet have.
5. This document will evolve throughout the duration of the cohort. Revisit it at the end of your course design process to be sure it reflects the course as you have designed it.

**Explanations for the various items in the course summary are provided here:**

Course Title:  EXAMPLE - Certified Nursing Assistant Preparation Course

Career Field: EXAMPLES – health, manufacturing, education

Adult Career Pathway: EXAMPLES – Health Unit Coordinator, Commercial Truck Driver

Type: EXAMPLES –

* On-ramp - designed for beginning and intermediate-level learners to introduce them to, and get them started on, a particular adult career pathway (ACP) program
* Bridge - designed to prepare advanced-level learners for entry into and success in post-secondary or other non-ABE training
* Integrated - an ABE instructor teaches a course together with a community/technical college faculty or other content trainer
* Concurrent - an ABE instructor teaches a course that meets during the same term (at a different time) as an ACP student’s college-level course or other training, designed to build the basic skills, transitions skills and digital literacy skills needed to succeed in the college course
* Certification exam prep - prepares students to pass a specific job/career-related exam
* Employment prep class - prepares students with knowledge and skills for an entry-level job that does not require certification or post-secondary study
* Employment advancement class - works with incumbent (currently employed) learners to equip them with knowledge and skills required for promotion to a higher level in their career sector.
* You may have a different type of class – provide an explanation in this section

Prepares students for: EXAMPLES –

* A certification/other exam; e.g., ServSafe national exam; CDL permit test
* A job: e.g., entry level customer service rep
* Post-secondary/training course: e.g., Intro to Welding course at community & technical college
* Earning a credential or certificate; e.g., Child Development Associate (CDA)
* Other: specify

Target Student Population:  MAY INCLUDE –

* ESL and/or ABE NRS functioning level
* Required TABE or CASAS reading, math scores
* Any other assessments required
* GED or adult diploma students
* Incumbent workers (currently employed)
* Other prerequisites

Duration of Course:  INCLUDE –

* # hours/class period, # class periods/week, # weeks/course = # total instructional hours

Brief Course Description:  INCLUDE –

* what the course is about, what it covers, what students learn
* 100-word maximum

Curriculum Materials: INCLUDE –

* what is included in your *course materials* for the instructor to teach the course
* 100-word maximum

Textbook(s): INCLUDE –

* complete reference - include publisher, publication date/edition number
* where/how to purchase
* ensure the texts are in print

Primary online sources of course material:

* list all links
* ensure all URLs are valid

Supplies and equipment: EXAMPLES –

* blood pressure cuffs (for CNA prep class)
* food thermometers (for food safety management class)

Program costs: INCLUDE –

* supplies, equipment, textbooks, online resource fees, other
* do not include cost of instructor salary

Individual student fees: INCLUDE –

* all costs that are the responsibility of the student
* may include tuition / course fee, textbooks, exam fees

Instructor qualifications: INCLUDE –

* required or recommended credentials
* necessary or preferred content knowledge, skills, experience

Curriculum author/s: INCLUDE –

* name, organization

Year created or revised/updated:

Contact person: INCLUDE –

* This is a person willing to receive calls/emails with questions about the curriculum, usually the author
* Include name, organization, address, email, phone

**Resources**

See Course Summaries of various courses listed in the ATLAS Adult Career Pathways online resource library - <https://atlasabe.org/resources/acp/>. When you click on a course, you will see a Course Summary with many of the same fields as are required here.

**TO DO**

* + - In the Template - complete all information you have.
    - Review what information you still need. Make a plan to complete the course summary:
    - How can you get the information?
    - Who do you need to ask?
    - What needs clarification?
    - What’s the timeline?

1. **Source Materials**

**Purpose**

* Gather and organize course materials that you already have.
* Identify and search for additional materials you need.

**Guidelines**

1. Don’t start from scratch! Tap as many existing materials as possible from the [ATLAS online resource library](https://atlasabe.org/resources/acp/) and other sources.
2. This process can potentially be overwhelming and never-ending. Decide how much time and effort you will give this up front and “call it good” when you have enough materials to start the course design process.
3. Gaining access to materials from college faculty, an employer, or other sources along the pathway requires building relationships, which in turn can take significant time. Talk with your ABE supervisor about how s/he can take the lead or support creating these connections, and how the program will compensate the time required.
4. Gathering resources is an ongoing process as you move into lesson planning.

**Types of materials**

There are several types of materials you will want to gather. These include:

1. Existing ABE-ACP course materials from your own program
   * Have you or another teacher taught this class before or begun course design work previously? Gather and organize all existing print and digital documents that currently exist.
2. Existing ABE-ACP course materials from other sources
   * Use the [ATLAS Adult Career Pathways Curriculum Resource Library](https://atlasabe.org/resources/acp/) to identify all course curricula / materials relevant to your ACP course. Do an initial review of these materials to find specific things you may choose to use (as is or modified).
   * Look at the following:
     + Courses in the same career sector / pathway – E.g., if you are designing a child development course, look at all the child development curricula available. Those for a higher level class than yours can provide great ideas for content and learning activities that you can modify for your level.
     + Courses of the same type or level as yours (e.g., on-ramp, exam prep, etc.) – Even courses in different career sectors can provide ideas for objectives and learning activities that may fit your course.
     + Courses (whatever career sector) that may include transitions skills or digital literacy skills learning activities that you can modify, contextualize and integrate into your ACP course.
     + Various examples of objectives, scope and sequence, etc.
3. Materials from the next course or step on the pathway

ACP courses are always leading learners to a next step. The goal here is to expose learners to authentic - or modified materials that reflect authentic materials - in their career sector. This proves highly motivational and makes clear to learners how the knowledge and skills they are learning relate directly to real-life requirements on their “next step”.

* + An on-ramp class leads to a bridge class. Get materials from the bridge class that learners will take in the future.
  + A bridge class leads to a post-secondary or other higher-level training. Get the college syllabus, textbooks, access to the online platform and anything else that faculty/trainers will share.
  + An integrated or concurrent class supports learners to succeed in their college class. Get the college syllabus, textbooks, and assignments.
  + A certification exam prep class aims for student success on an exam. Get sample test questions, plus print and online study materials, ideally from the company/agency that administers the exam, otherwise from other reputable sources. (Beware of sub-standard exam prep materials that may not be accurate.)
  + An employment prep class prepares students for a particular type of job. Get authentic materials from the job for which they are preparing (see next section.)

1. Authentic materials

All ACP classes are preparing learners for eventual employment in the target career sector. All students should be exposed to authentic materials from jobs in the career sector as much as possible. These can include documents, manuals or signs; actual tools, equipment and supplies or pictures of these items; and more. It’s great if you can tour a workplace with an employer host to identify and gather authentic materials, understand their uses, take photos, etc. You might also check websites of state regulatory agencies (e.g., Dept. of Health and Human Services, Dept. of Transportation) for standard forms like incident reports.

Examples:

* + Manufacturing - “process” documents (step-by-step instructions for assembly of a manufactured item), sample parts and completed product
  + Construction - blueprints, tools, safety manuals
  + Education paraprofessional - learning activities, textbooks, etc. from K-12 classrooms
  + Early childhood education - floor plans, daily observation logs, children’s manipulatives for various ages
  + Food safety - food thermometers, temp logs, photos of posted personal hygiene instructions, cleaning chemicals
  + Healthcare - online log of patient vital signs, dietary restriction lists, blood pressure cuffs, stethoscopes
  + Hospitality - housekeeper scheduling chart, cleaning supplies and equipment

Note: Some materials are proprietary. ALWAYS get permission from employers for anything you want to use for instructional purposes in your ACP class. Some materials (e.g., blueprints or manufacturing process documents) may need to be modified to avoid exposing trade secrets.

1. Other
   * These are any other source materials you have that will inform your course design and instruction.

**Resources**

* + The *Competency Model Clearinghouse* - [www.careeronestop.org/CompetencyModel/](http://www.careeronestop.org/CompetencyModel/). Has a wealth of information on competencies required in various career sectors. Look at Industry Models (click the tab near the top), choose your career sector and sub-sector, and see the graphic. Then choose How To -- Download…, and find an extremely useful *Curriculum Analysis Worksheet* along with extensive other resources.
  + O-net Online - [www.onetonline.org/find](http://www.onetonline.org/find). Use search engine or quick search box at top right to find a specific job description. Each job description includes required tasks, technology skills, knowledge, skills, abilities, work activities, work context, required education/training, interests, work styles, work values, wage trends and more.

**TO DO**

* + - In the Template - complete the chart for all materials you *have* and those you *want* or *need* to get.
    - Add rows in the Template chart as needed to list all your source materials. Add notes as you wish.
    - Organize your digital and print materials in a way that works for you, so that you can use them efficiently in your course design process.

1. **Course Review**

**Purpose**

* + Assess your starting point as you begin the course design process, using criteria for quality course design.
  + Assess again upon completion of the course design process to determine progress made and work yet to be completed.

**Guidelines**

1. The rubric provides a roadmap of where you’re heading with your course design, whether designing a new course or improving an existing course.
2. If you are working on a new course, most items will be marked *No*, of course. This is not a problem – it just notes your starting point.
3. If you are working with an existing course – yours or one from another source – this rubric will help you do a thorough review of what is already done and what needs work during the cohort.
4. Finally, set priorities. Review the items in the rubric marked *Partial* or *No* and decide which items are most important for you to focus on in the amount of time you will have.

**TO DO**

* Complete the *Course Review* chart. Mark *Yes, Partial* or *No* next to each item. Make notes if you wish.
* Use an O to mark your evaluation of your course at the beginning of the cohort.
* Use an X to mark your evaluation of your course at the end of the cohort. This will give you a good sense of your progress.
* To finalize your course design document, remove the Os, leave the Xs, and make any notes below the rubric that are important for another teacher to understand the status of the course.
* Set priorities for the work to complete during the time allotted for your course design process.

1. **Course Objectives**

**Purpose**

* Clearly define the knowledge and skills students will gain from the course.

**Guidelines**

1. Choosing what to cover in a course

Based on the type of career pathway or occupational prep class you are designing, here are some ideas for how to think about what and how much to include, which will then be reflected in your course objectives. (When you get to Step 7 – Scope & Sequence, this notion of what is included is the “scope” of the course.)

* 1. On-ramp – Generally “less is more” in terms of the amount and complexity of career-specific content to cover. Introduce foundational concepts, key vocabulary and select skills from the focus career. Then integrate significant basic skills, transitions skills and digital literacy skills into the content lessons.

EXAMPLE: A child development on-ramp course may introduce concepts and vocabulary of development, stages of development, types of development (large and small motor, cognitive, etc.); develop learners’ literacy skills while teaching them how to read to young children; develop learners’ numeracy skills as they learn methods to teach numeracy to children through songs and rhymes; develop critical thinking through observation activities (evaluate the safety of the environment); and develop digital literacy skills by having students evaluate various learning websites for preschoolers.

* 1. Bridge – Ensure mastery of foundational concepts and vocabulary necessary for comprehending career-specific content at the post-secondary or technical training level (their next step). Build reading and writing skills (and numeracy skills, where applicable) necessary at the next level, with some assignments that “mirror” those in the training or post-secondary course they will take next. Provide rationale for and practice of transitions and digital literacy skills you know they will need for success in their next step.
  2. Integrated or concurrent – Provide lessons that develop the literacy, math, transitions and digital skills of immediate relevance to succeed in the post-secondary or technical training course students are taking.
  3. Certification exam prep – Must cover all occupational knowledge required to pass the exam. In addition, include literacy, math, transitions and digital literacy skills essential for success in the job participants will enter upon passing the exam.
  4. Employment prep or employment advancement class – Based on information from employer partners, include key concepts, vocabulary and skills necessary upon entry into the job; plus the literacy, math, transitions and digital literacy skills that are essential for entry level employees. Employment advancement classes will cover contextualized knowledge and skills that hiring managers look for in granting promotions.

1. Creating an integrated set of course objectives
2. Objectives should cover these four areas:
   1. Occupational knowledge and skills – specific to the career sector they are preparing for
   2. Basic skills – reading, writing, speaking, listening, numeracy
   3. Transitions skills
   4. Digital literacy skills
3. Consider creating 10 to 12 total course objectives.
4. All objectives that you establish for the course will need to be assessed in some way. (Assessment of objectives will be covered in Step 6.)
5. Objectives should be integrated - i.e., create a single set of objectives for a course that includes all four areas of learning.
6. Learning activities are then designed to equip learners to meet the objectives.
7. With clarity of objectives, creative learning activities can be developed that promote several objectives at once. Example: a self-directed information-gathering and reading assignment using online resources related to the focus career area could promote objectives in all four areas!
8. Course objectives can be broad. You will define more specific objectives at the unit and/or lesson level. (Avoid creating course objectives by compiling every unit or lesson objective into one long laundry list.)
9. It may help to think about how you describe the course to potential or new students to the course. What will they learn? What will they be able to do when they finish the course?
10. Writing clear objectives
11. Write objectives using *action verbs*. Use the [verb list](https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/resources/Teaching/CourseDesign/Objectives/BloomsTaxonomyVerbs.pdf) noted in the Resources section below. Focusing on concrete actions and behaviors allows us to make student learning explicit and communicates to students the expectations. Using action verbs enables you to more easily measure the degree to which students can do what you expect them to do.
12. Avoid using non-specific verbs such as “understand.” How will students *demonstrate* that they understand?
    1. Instead of “Students will understand how to work with patients experiencing dementia.” → “Students will be able to list caregiving guidelines for working with patients experiencing dementia.” Or “Students will be able to demonstrate best practices in working with dementia patients.”
13. Ensure that objectives state what learners will be able to do by the end of the course rather than the material you will teach/cover.
    1. Instead of “This course will cover personal hygiene practices necessary to keep food safe.” → “Students will be able to evaluate various workplace scenarios for proper and improper personal hygiene practices and recommend improvements.” Or “Students will be able to classify proper and improper personal hygiene practices.”
14. See *Step 5 Standards Alignment* for links to content standards that can also help with formulation of course objectives.

**Resources**

* A helpful source for writing SWBAT objectives: <http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/designteach/design/learningobjectives.html>.
* A partial list of action verbs, using Bloom’s taxonomy: <https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/resources/Teaching/CourseDesign/Objectives/BloomsTaxonomyVerbs.pdf>

**Reflection**

*“Writing the course objectives for my Introduction to Child Development course was the hardest and most important part of the process for me. I now have a cohesive set of objectives that cover occupational knowledge and skills* plus *literacy and numeracy, transitions and digital skills.”* - Laura Temali, St. Paul ABE, 2018-19 cohort participant

**TO DO**

* Use the graphic organizer below to generate course objectives.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Occupational knowledge and skills** | **Basic skills**  **Literacy, language, numeracy** |
| **Transitions skills** | **Digital literacy skills** |

* Then in the Template, using what you’ve generated in the graphic organizer above, write a list of 10-12 course objectives – either separated by category or integrated.

1. **Standards Alignment**

**Purpose**

* Ensure that you embed Minnesota ABE content standards in your course.

**Guidelines**

1. Minnesota ABE is guided by three sets of content standards:
   1. College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS)
   2. Academic, Career & Employability Skills – Transitions Integration Framework (ACES-TIF)
   3. Northstar Digital Literacy Skills
2. The expectation is that ABE courses provide skill development in all three areas, and that these standards are made explicit in course documentation for both instructors and learners.
3. Clearly differentiate two levels of standards:
   1. *Primary* - goal is mastery of the standard; these standards must be assessed
   2. *Secondary* - goal is exposure to the standard, touching on a standard, or partially meeting a standard; these standards need not be assessed for mastery
4. *Meeting* a standard means that you expect students to master that standard. Reaching toward a standard means that you expect students to demonstrate progress toward meeting that standard.
5. Often in an ABE-level ACP course, more is less – i.e., do not go through the standards and try to find every standard you’d like to cover. Focus in on standards that fit well with the needs of the learners’ level and the target career sector, then provide plenty of learning opportunities to meet or reach toward those standards. There is no set number of standards to include in your course; take an approach that is both ambitious and realistic.
6. Many learning activities can be created that embed standards from all three areas.

Example – An online activity that requires reading and writing skills, self-management and critical thinking related to a source on career-specific information can promote basic, transitions and digital skills simultaneously.

1. Alignment with all three sets of standards is an ongoing process. Professional development and a plethora of online resources are available to increase your understanding of the standards and create learning activities to help learners meet or reach toward the standards. (Instructional approaches to teaching this integrated content is the focus of ATLAS’s Contextualized Career-focused Basic Skills (CCI) training cohort.)
2. After you identify the standards you want students to meet or reach toward, go back and hone your objectives so that they are consistent with the standards you are embedding. Often a course objective can be written to clearly parallel the standard. Example:

* Reading standard 5B – *Know and use various text features to locate key facts or information in a text efficiently*.
* The course objective for a Certified Nursing Assistant prep course based on this standard could be *Know and use various text features to locate key information in CNA work-related documents efficiently.*

**Resources**

* Useful summary of three sets of MN ABE Content Standards: <https://atlasabe.org/key-activities/ccr-standards/>.
* College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS): <https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/CCRStandardsAdultEd.pdf>. (Most ABE programs and instructors have a print version of this 150-page book.)
* Academic, Career & Employability Skills – Transitions Integration Framework (ACES-TIF): <https://atlasabe.org/key-activities/aces/>.
* Northstar Digital Literacy Skills: <https://assets.digitalliteracyassessment.org/static/main_website/docs/NDLA-standards-2018-11-18.pdf>

**TO DO**

* + - In the Template - work with each set of standards to choose the standards that you will embed and assess in your course.
    - If you choose to include both *primary* and *secondary* standards, type the primary standards in normal font and the secondary standards in *italics*.
    - Under *Section a) CCRS*, there is a note “See also CCRS Alignment Evaluation and Rating Tool and High-Value Action Tool for this course.” These tools are available at <https://atlasabe.org/resource/ela-ccrs-alignment-evaluation-rating-tool/> and <https://atlasabe.org/resource/ela-ccrs-high-value-action-tool/>. If you choose to complete these, include with your template and any other course design documents. If not completed for this course, delete this statement in the template. If you are not aware of what these are, speak to someone in your program leading CCRS alignment efforts, or disregard for now.

1. **Assessment**

**Purpose**

* Determine how you will evaluate whether students have met the course objectives.

**Guidelines**

1. Assessment is an ongoing process of ascertaining, understanding and improving student learning. Effective assessment also informs instruction.
2. After establishing course objectives, determine evidence that will demonstrate what students are learning related to these objectives.
3. *Formative assessments* gather ongoing feedback on student learning that can inform instruction. They allow the instructor to evaluate what teaching strategies are or aren’t working.
4. *Summative assessments* determine whether learners have met objectives at the end of a lesson, unit or course.
5. Assessment can be done in many and various ways. Examples: writing assignments, presentations, demonstrations, projects, portfolios, and quizzes/tests.
6. See *Using consistent learning task formats* in Step 9. Consider using a learning task format (LTF) several times as a learning activity and formative assessment tool. Then use the *same* LTF for a summative assessment. This way the learners are familiar with the *task*, which allows them to demonstrate their knowledge and skill without the task being a stumbling block to show what they know.

Example: Use a consistent learning task format for reading comprehension questions as you read articles as a class. Then create a summative assessment on a reading objective that uses this same LTF with a new, unfamiliar article.

1. In describing an assessment to measure meeting or reaching toward a course objective, include:
   1. The tool or method to be used

Examples: worksheet, quiz, test, role play, mock interview

* 1. Criteria to meet the objective

Examples: Passing=80% correct on test; Passing=demonstrated 7 of 10 requirements in role play per rubric

* 1. Who will evaluate / how they will be evaluated

Examples: Volunteer will conduct mock interview, rate each response on scale of 1-5 based on established criteria; Instructor will score test

**Example**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Objective** | **Assessment** |
| SWBAT read and reply appropriately to professional emails. | Students reply to weekly emails from instructor, requiring them to read a work-related problem and respond with advice or suggestions on how to resolve the issue.  To meet the objective: respond to 80% of emails; meet 80% of language usage requirements as listed on a rubric in last three emails |
| SWBAT demonstrate safe competent care steps within the guidelines of a personal care assistant role | Students will demonstrate all the proper steps to hand washing without recontamination based on the performance skill checklist. Other students will have rubric to assess classmates. |

**Resources**

* [*Formative assessment: Helping to see if students “get it”,*](https://atlasabe.org/news/formative-assessment-helping-to-see-if-students-get-it/) article by Kristine Kelly, ATLAS Literacy & ELA Coordinator. Includes links to 60 formative assessment tools and 40 reflection questions!
* [*Leading Students to Greater Understanding Through Formative Assessment*](https://atlasabe.org/news/leading-students-to-greater-understanding-through-formative-assessment/) - article by Patsy Egan, ATLAS. Includes link to 1.5-hour webinar led by Andy Nash, WorldEd.
* LINCS (Literacy Information and Communication System) Assessment Group - <https://community.lincs.ed.gov/group/assessment>. Connect with ABE colleagues around the country on issues of assessment.
* See example [here](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1nu0WompaRMGxEiEYwedTiqjb3uWu4e-T).

**TO DO**

* + - In the Template - complete the Assessment chart for your course objectives.

1. **Scope & Sequence**

**Purpose**

* Create a document that makes clear what is covered in the course and in what order it is taught.

**Guidelines**

1. “Scope” is what will be covered in the course.
2. “Sequence” is the order in which it will be covered.
3. The scope and sequence document provides a roadmap for the instructor.
4. Units and lessons should be in a logical order and build on one another.
5. Lesson materials should be organized or labeled in reference to the scope and sequence for easy access (e.g, Unit 1 – vocabulary; Unit 3 – career exploration)
6. The scope and sequence should include activities to fulfill *all* course learning objectives in all four areas - occupational, basic, transitions and digital literacy skills. It should also include all assessments to measure fulfillment of objectives.
7. The format can vary. Use the template provided or create a format that works for you and that is appropriate for the course you are designing.
8. A scope and sequence, like a roadmap, provides intentions for the route to take toward meeting course objectives. However, an instructor must still be flexible and responsive to the abilities, needs and pace of each group of students. (You may wish to add this as a note in your Scope & Sequence section.)
9. As you work on your scope and sequence, you may find you need to go back and revise your objectives, esp. if you find you are trying to cover too much material with too little time to meet the course objectives.
10. An initial scope and sequence is always “provisional” - i.e., you are likely to modify it after teaching the course, as you discover time required for various activities, order of activities that works best, etc.

**SCOPE – How do I decide what to cover in the course?**

The *scope* in your Scope & Sequence document will reflect all that you have laid out in course objectives and assessment plans. Be careful to stick with that and not add in other activities that are not in line with your objectives. See *Step 4 - Course Objectives* for guidelines on what to cover in your course.

**SEQUENCE – How do I decide the *order* of content?**

* 1. If you have a reference textbook or training manual, you may choose to follow the order for the occupational content provided in those texts. Someone else has figured out a logical order that you can use.
  2. Think about building knowledge and skills over the duration of a course. What do they need to know before they can do X, for example, and ensure that you work on the foundational skills first.

A concrete example is that learners need to understand place value before learning long division. Before learning various skills related to being a CNA, it’s essential that learners understand basically what that job is.

* 1. Basic skills – reading, writing, speaking/listening and math – often need to be “scaffolded” over the duration of a course. This will inform your order for this content.
  2. Transitions skills can be integrated throughout and may not need to be in a specific order.
  3. For digital literacy skills, learners need basic computer skills before they can move on to other skills.
  4. Some courses may consist of self-contained units that can be done in any order. In this case each time the course is taught, the instructor may order the units differently – perhaps based on student interest or specific skills you want to target. For this kind of course, list all the units in the scope and sequence, but un-numbered, and make a note that explains that an instructor can choose the order.
* **How do I create a format for my scope and sequence document?**
  1. Use the template provided. The template suggests a simple chart organized by week, topic or unit that lays out the objectives and the corresponding activities to meet that objective, assessments to evaluate attainment of the objective, and the materials used for those learning activities and assessments.
  2. *OR* Create a format that works for you and how your brain works.
  3. Don’t worry too much about whether your format will work for a different instructor. It just needs to provide a clear roadmap of the course – what to teach when. A new instructor is likely to modify the scope and sequence document over time, but they have a clear starting point.
* **How much detail should I include in the scope and sequence document?**
  1. The scope and sequence will be easier to follow if it is not *too* detailed. But include whatever is useful as a roadmap for you and future instructors.
  2. Ensure that all course objectives are covered in the scope and sequence. It should be visible how an objective is being met by reviewing the scope and sequence document; this alignment should be clear to someone picking it up for the first time.

**Resources**

* Many textbooks in your ABE program have a scope and sequence chart at the front of the book. These can serve as a helpful example.
* Find Scope & Sequence documents for many of the courses in the ATLAS ACP curriculum resource library.

**Reflection**

*“Writing a thorough scope and sequence for our commercial driver’s license exam prep course was a huge accomplishment. It clarified for me the various elements and order of the course and allowed me to hone parts of the course I was struggling with.” –* Liz Harner, SouthWest Metro ABE, 2018-19 cohort participant

**TO DO**

* Use the template provided or create your own format.
* Create a chart for a complete scope and sequence for your course.
* You may choose to refer to course objectives by number/letter as they appear in Step 4 (simply to keep the scope and sequence document shorter than writing out each objective in full).

1. **Student Syllabus**

**Purpose**

* Create a document that effectively communicates key course information to students.

**Guidelines**

1. Use the syllabus to *set the tone* for the course.
2. It is a tool for making *explicit* to learners what you as the instructor know but often forget to share with them.
3. It communicates what, when, and how students will learn.
4. The syllabus makes clear to students what they need to do to be successful in the course.
5. It lays out expectations in terms of student responsibilities. You can minimize misunderstandings about course expectations by being clear with students in the syllabus and going over the syllabus information more than once.
6. As you go through the syllabus with a class, it can facilitate formation and cohesion of the group, with clarity of “what we are doing here together”.
7. The syllabus is a crucial document in most post-secondary courses. Therefore, students in ACP courses should become familiar with the term “syllabus” and the responsibility of students to keep track of and refer to a syllabus regularly.
8. You choose what content to include in the syllabus.
9. A syllabus can be used at *every* level of ABE/ESL. Modify the language, format and quantity of content to communicate effectively with the level of students in your course.
10. Begin to mirror a college syllabus in terminology and content even at the lower levels. At the same time, avoid unfamiliar “teacher talk” or jargon.

**Reflection**

*“The syllabus made me go back through my scope and sequence, my assessment, and all the way back to my standards, and made me revisit everything to make sure it all tied together.  The syllabus helped me see things through student eyes and allowed me to review things from a different angle.”* – Jennifer Hellekson, Detroit Lakes ABE, 2018-19 cohort participant

**What to include**

This is information typically included in a college-level syllabus. You choose what to include in your ABE/ACP course syllabus. The template provides an example of a simplified version with more understandable terms.

SYLLABUS [label it clearly]

**Key course information:**

* Name of school
* Course Title
* Semester/Year
* Class location
* Class schedule
* Interesting quote, motivating information
* Instructor name, office, email, phone
* Office Hours – scheduled hours; by appointment; virtual office hours
* Grading – options

**Rationale:** Why does this course exist? How does it fit in with the rest of the field/area’s curriculum; or into the whole adult career pathway program?)

**Course Aims and Outcomes:**

***Aims -*** Thinking from the prospective students’ point of view, what general outcomes is the course designed to achieve?

**Specific Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

List your course objectives here, in student-friendly language

**Format and Procedures:**

How is the course structured and how will classes be carried out? What behavioral expectations does the instructor have for the students in class? If the course has multiple formats (like lecture, lab and discussion, group learning projects and/or presentations) these should be explained clearly.

**My Assumptions**

This is a section where the instructor can communicate his or her personal assumptions and/or biases regarding the course content to set it off from other similar courses and other instructors. Does the instructor have a unique operational definition for some of the core course concepts? What principles and/or beliefs about either the content or how to effectively learn the content held by the instructor would it be helpful for the students to know up front?

**Course Requirements:** Whatever tasks and assignments you include in your course should be aligned with the specified learning outcomes you have defined and specified earlier (final skills, knowledge, attitudes and values the students leave the course with).

* Class attendance and participation policy
* Course readings: Textbook, background readings, course packet available where; use of course website; download and bring handouts to class
* Assignments

**Grading Procedures: Grades** for the different credit options will be based on:

**Respect for all students**

You can make a statement here about being open to other views, learning from one another in a diverse classroom, norms for interaction, etc.

**Tentative Course Schedule**

This can be a simplified version of your scope and sequence chart, so students can see that there is a clear plan of what will be covered, in what order and when.

**Academic Integrity**

This is a standard section in a post-secondary syllabus. If you are teaching a bridge course, consider mirroring the college-level statement here, to orient learners to these policies and to ensure these standards are followed in your own class.

**Accommodations for students with disabilities**

This is also a standard section in a post-secondary syllabus. Again, in an advanced-level course, consider including a statement here that reflects your own school’s policies on accommodation.

**Resources**

* Writing a syllabus - <https://teaching.cornell.edu/teaching-resources/designing-your-course/writing-syllabus>
* Using a graphic syllabus - <https://facultyinnovate.utexas.edu/graphic-syllabus>
* Teaching about the syllabus as a transitions self-management skill - <http://atlasabe.org/resources/aces/self-management> - Choose Sample Lessons – Self Management – Intermediate or Advanced

**TO DO**

* In the Template - write your student syllabus using the template provided or create your own format.

1. **Instructional Materials**

**Purpose**

* Organize course materials for easy access by you and others.
* Establish consistent “learning task formats” to support student learning and ease development of learning activities for the course.

**Guidelines**

Organizing and storing digital files

Instructional materials can be organized and stored in a variety of ways.

1. Choices for organizing include:
   * Create individual documents with consistent file names (see guidelines below)
   * Create unit documents with all materials for each unit included (see [example](https://atlasabe.org/resource/customer-service-occupational-prep/))
2. Choices for storage include:
   * Preferred: Store in Google Drive, organized in unit folders (see [example](https://atlasabe.org/resource/introduction-to-medical-terminology-1-and-2/) – click on *Access Curriculum – View Materials*)
   * Store in Dropbox, organized in unit folders (see [example](https://atlasabe.org/resource/introduction-to-nursing-assistant-pre-cna-course/) - click on *Access Curriculum – View Materials*)
   * Create a Schoology or Moodle course to hold all materials in an organized way (see Schoology.com and moodle.org)
   * On your school’s website
3. Guidelines for file naming

These are best practices, a goal to set especially if you are starting from scratch. You will find that following these protocols simplifies everything down the line.

* + Label documents to ensure that a new teacher using the Scope and Sequence can understand which materials are used when.
  + Establish consistent file names for all documents.

Example:  Unit 1 - Student Materials; Unit 1 - Instructor Materials

* + Add a “footer” on all documents; include your program name, curriculum writer name and month/year, so that credit is given when shared with others.

Example:  St. Paul ABE, E. Andress, March 2015

* + Note that these “document protocols” work best when starting to design a new course.  If you are working to improve an existing course, you may find this step overly time-consuming.  Perhaps you’ll choose to at least add a standard footer to any new materials you develop yourself.

1. Tip: This can seem like an enormous job. Course materials may be constantly evolving as you teach your own course. For documenting the course to share with others, you can choose a point to “let go” and say "okay, these are ready to teach or to share."

Using Consistent Learning Task Formats

* A learning task format is a routine structure for activities and tasks that provide practice of lesson content.
  + Example: When introducing new unit vocabulary, students always begin by previewing the vocabulary list and evaluating their current knowledge of the terms - 0 = I never saw this term; 1 = I saw or heard this term, but I don’t know what it means; 2 = I know the basic meaning, but I don’t use this term; 3 = I understand and use this term.
  + Example: A consistent set or type of CCRS-aligned comprehension questions is used when reading non-fiction articles at any level.
* Establishing consistent learning task formats creates predictability and a foundation for success for learners.
* Consistent learning task formats can also simplify instructor preparation of lessons.
* Basic guideline: When teaching *new* content, use a *familiar* learning task format. When introducing a *new* learning task format, use *familiar* content.
* Patience: Any new, unfamiliar learning task format will likely be challenging for learners. The beauty of using them consistently is that over time students do in fact become proficient at the learning process and can in turn assist new or struggling students with the task itself. It gives a high sense of competence to master *how* we are learning things.

**Resources / Examples**

* Look at some of your own instructional methods/approaches/activities and establish a few to use consistently across units – these are your learning task formats.
* See some examples of learning task formats [here](https://atlasabe.org/resource/learning-task-formats/).

**TO DO**

* In the Template - describe how you will organize course materials.
* Provide a link to a Google Drive folder of all course materials if available. Or provide instructions on how to access the materials in another way.
* List and briefly describe or provide examples of several learning task formats you will use in your instruction.

1. **Teacher Notes**

**Purpose**

* Provide helpful guidance to a new instructor using your course design and instructional materials.

**Guidelines**

1. Notes can be brief and need not be overly prescriptive.
2. Think about key things you would convey verbally to a new instructor planning to teach the course for the first time.
3. You may find yourself adding notes after each time you teach the course, based on what you learn, what works and doesn’t, tips and tricks, etc.

**To include**

* General approach that informs design and delivery of this course
* Course set-up - what needs to be done to be ready for the class? May include:
* online platform, accounts, etc. (e.g., Learner Web, My Foundations Lab, Accuplacer Diagnostic tests)
* field trips, transportation
* guest speakers
* background checks
* schedule for navigator, other institutional resource people to visit class
* Course materials
* What is provided?
* How are materials organized, labeled, etc.?
* How should materials be used?
* What materials will the new instructor need to create or modify?
* What supplies and equipment are required?

A note about copyrighted materials: If your materials include scans of *copyrighted* materials, be sure that complete reference information is provided in teacher notes or elsewhere for other users of your curriculum to be able to find / purchase the copyrighted materials. Also, add this to your Teacher Notes:  Instructional materials - NOTE:  Any copyrighted materials are provided for reference only and may not be reproduced or used in any way by programs/instructors who do not purchase/own original print versions.

**TO DO**

* Write brief teacher notes.
* Add any other notes you want to include besides those in the template.

***Adult Career Pathways Course Design Template***

*Use in tandem with Adult Career Pathways Course Design Guidelines document. [To complete this document for your own course, delete this note. Add your course information to replace the bracketed title lines. Also replace the content in the footer and use it to identify your course. Finally, move the completed Template from this Guidelines + Template document to make a separate document.]*

**[Name of course]**

[ABE program]

[Your name]

[Date – update this as you go along]

**Content - Course Design Steps**

1. Course summary
2. Source materials
3. Course review
4. Course objectives
5. Standards alignment
6. Assessment
7. Scope & sequence
8. Student syllabus
9. Instructional materials
10. Teacher notes
11. **Course Summary**

Course Title:

Career Field:

Adult Career Pathway:

Type:

Prepares students for:

Target Student Population:

Duration of Course:

Brief Course Description:

Curriculum Materials:

Textbooks:

Primary online sources of course material:

Supplies and equipment:

Program costs:

Individual student fees:

Instructor qualifications:

Curriculum author:

Year created:

Contact person:

Plan and timeline for completing info above:

1. **Source Materials**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Materials (include links when available)** | **Have** | **Need** | **N/A** |
| Existing ABE-ACP course materials – my program |  |  |  |
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| Existing ABE-ACP course materials – other sources |  |  |  |
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| Materials from next course or step on the pathway |  |  |  |
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| Authentic materials from career / job |  |  |  |
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| Other |  |  |  |
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Plan and timeline for gathering materials marked “need” above:

1. **Course Review**

O indicates the status of the course at the *beginning* of the course design process.

X indicates the status of the course at the *end* of the course design process.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Element** | **Yes** | **Partial** | **No** | **Notes** |
| Course summary provides complete information describing the course. |  |  |  |  |
| Course objectives are clearly defined as measurable learning outcomes. |  |  |  |  |
| Course objectives fit the student literacy level and hours of instruction. |  |  |  |  |
| Course objectives include *occupational* knowledge and skills required in the given career. |  |  |  |  |
| Course objectives include *basic skills* that promote and are aligned to College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS). |  |  |  |  |
| Course objectives include *transitions skills* that promote and are aligned to Academic, Career & Employability Skills (ACES). |  |  |  |  |
| Course objectives include *digital literacy* skills that promote and are aligned to the Northstar Digital Literacy standards. |  |  |  |  |
| Formative and summative assessments are included to measure attainment of the course objectives. |  |  |  |  |
| The course scope and sequence chart clarifies what is covered in the course and in what order. |  |  |  |  |
| A student syllabus uses understandable language to convey course objectives, expectations and other essential information about the course. |  |  |  |  |
| Instructional materials are organized digitally for easy access. |  |  |  |  |
| Instructional materials are labeled/named to correspond with the scope and sequence. |  |  |  |  |
| Instructional materials draw from “next step” sources and authentic job materials. |  |  |  |  |
| Instructional materials include various consistent *learning task formats* (routine structures for activities that provide practice of content). |  |  |  |  |
| Teacher notes provide guidance to a new instructor on how to utilize the curriculum materials. |  |  |  |  |

Top priorities for completion during cohort:

1. **Course Objectives**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to *(SWBAT):*

* 1. Occupational knowledge and skills
     1. …
  2. Basic skills – literacy, language, numeracy
     1. …
  3. Transitions skills
     1. …
  4. Digital literacy skills
     1. …

*OR* One list of integrated objectives, without the 4 headings, but inclusive of the four categories of skills.

In subsequent steps, objectives may be referenced by letter and number, e.g., *Obj. D.10.*

1. **Standards Alignment**

Primary standards are noted in normal font. Primary standards are embedded and assessed for mastery.

*Secondary standards are noted in italics. Students get exposure but are not assessed for mastery.*

See <http://atlasabe.org/resources/content-standards> for information on all three sets of standards. Numbers below refer to standards as outlined in these documents.

1. College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS)

*See* *<https://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/CCRStandardsAdultEd.pdf> for complete list and description of standards.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Included**  **(✔)** | **Category** | **Anchor standards embedded** |
|  | Reading & Reading Foundations |  |
|  | Speaking & Listening |  |
|  | Language |  |
|  | Writing |  |
|  | Math |  |

See also *CCRS Alignment Evaluation and Rating Tool* and *High-Value Action Tool* for this course.

1. Academic, Career & Employability Skills: Transitions Integration Framework

*See* <https://atlasabe.org/resource/transitions-integration-framework/>.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Included**  **(✔)** | **Skill** | **Sub-skills embedded** |
|  | Effective communication |  |
|  | Learning strategies |  |
|  | Critical thinking |  |
|  | Self-management |  |
|  | Developing future pathways |  |
|  | Navigating systems |  |

1. Northstar Digital Literacy Standards

*See* [*https://assets.digitalliteracyassessment.org/static/main\_website/docs/NDLA-standards-2018-11-18.pdf*](https://assets.digitalliteracyassessment.org/static/main_website/docs/NDLA-standards-2018-11-18.pdf) *for complete list and description of standards.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Included**  **(✔)** | **Skill** | **Sub-skills embedded** |
|  | Basic computer skills |  |
|  | Internet basics |  |
|  | Using email |  |
|  | Windows |  |
|  | Mac OS |  |
|  | Microsoft Word |  |
|  | Microsoft Excel |  |
|  | Microsoft PowerPoint |  |
|  | Social media |  |
|  | Information literacy |  |
|  | Career research skills |  |

1. **Assessment**

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| --- | --- |
| **Course Objective** | **Assessment** |
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1. **Scope & Sequence**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Unit / Week / Topic** | **Objectives** | **Activities / Materials / Assessments** |
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1. **Student Syllabus**

***Name of school***

***Course Title***

***SYLLABUS***

*Interesting quote, motivating information*

*Semester/Year*

*Class location*

*Class Meeting time(s)*

Instructor:

Office Hours:

**Why this class:**

**Course objectives:**

**How we will learn:**

**My assumptions:**

**Course requirements:**

* Attendance
* Class participation
* Assignments
* Exams

**Class expectations:**

**Accommodations for students with disabilities:**

**Tentative course schedule:**

1. **Instructional Materials**
2. My method for organizing course materials:
3. Link to my course materials in Google Drive (if applicable) or other way to access materials:
4. Learning task formats with descriptions that I use in my instructional materials:
5. **Teacher notes**
6. Course overview / approach
7. Course materials

* Materials provided
* How materials are named and organized
* How to use materials
* Materials a new instructor will need to create or modify
* Required supplies and equipment

1. Course set-up - what needs to be done to be ready for the class