

Undergraduate Course and Syllabus Development



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA

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Developing Courses is a *Process*



Like writing, developing a course is a process which:

- Takes time
- Does not always start at square one
- Is not always orderly
- Is iterative

Developing Courses is a *Process*



- Review AUA **Mission Statement**
- Review **Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes**
- Review **Course Description**
- Review **Curriculum Map**
- Benchmark
- Discuss with **faculty**
- Review University **Policy** on Course Syllabus Format and **Template**
- Draft **Course-Based Student Learning Outcomes** –
that **align** with Program Student Learning Outcomes
- Draft an **outline** – Topics and content to be covered by week
- Draft **Assignments and Assessment Methods** –
that align with Student Learning Outcomes
- Draft Syllabus
- Review Final Draft with Program Chair / Dean

AUA Mission Statement



How does the course reflect/fulfill AUA's Mission?

*As an institution of higher learning, the American University of Armenia provides **teaching, research, and service** programs that **prepare students and enable faculty and researchers to address the needs of Armenia and the surrounding region for sustainable development**, in a setting that values and develops **academic excellence, free inquiry, integrity, scholarship, leadership, and service to society.***

Program Goals and Program Student Learning Outcomes



How does the course align with Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes?

Academic Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes

University-wide Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes

Course Description



What does a course description tell about the course?

Course descriptions contain information about **credit hours**, **pre- or co- requisites**, and **course content and objectives**.

Curriculum Map



How does the course fit into the rest of the program?
What outcomes does the course intend to address and at what level?

Excerpt from General Education Program Curriculum Map – Subject to Change

- 4.1 Produce and deliver written and oral presentations, and communicate with specialists and non-specialists using appropriate media and technology.
- 4.2 Think critically and creatively, conceptualizing real-world problems from different perspectives.
- 4.3 Work productively in diverse teams and solve problems collaboratively.
- 5.1 Use common software and information technology to pursue inquiry relevant to their academic and professional fields, and personal interests.
- 5.2 Weigh evidence and arguments, and appreciate and engage in diverse modes of inquiry characteristic of historical, cultural, political, economic, and quantitative disciplines.
- 5.3 Properly document and synthesize existing scholarship and data, keep current with developments, conduct independent research, and discover and learn new material on their own.

	<i>4.1</i>	<i>4.2</i>	<i>4.3</i>	<i>5.1</i>	<i>5.2</i>	<i>5.3</i>
Freshman English 1	B	B	B	B	B	B
Freshman English 2	I	I	I	B	I	B
Armenian Lang / Lit 1	I	I	I		I	
Armenian History 2	I	I			A	I
Intro to Philosophy	B	I	I		I	
Modern American History	I	I	B	I	I	B
Health and Nutrition	I	I			I	B
Intro to Environmental Studies	I	I			I	B

Benchmarking



- Other U.S.-accredited universities
- Other American universities abroad
- Other universities in Armenia

What topics are generally covered in similar courses?

Are there any commonly-used resources?


What about typical assignments, reading material.

Discuss with Faculty



- Has this course been taught before at AUA?
If so, talk with others who have taught the course
- Other faculty in the program (or other programs), **especially those who teach prerequisites or follow-up courses.**
- Program Chair
- Dean

Review Policy on Course Syllabus Format and Course Syllabus Template



A. Administrative

- a. Course title and number
- b. The number of credit hours
- c. Instructor information (name, contacts, etc)
- d. Instructor office location and office hours
- e. The prerequisites and co-requisites for the course
- f. Term /Year
- g. Weekly/daily schedule of class sessions
- h. Assignment and test make-up procedures
- i. [Optional, but desirable] Objectives for each lecture/session

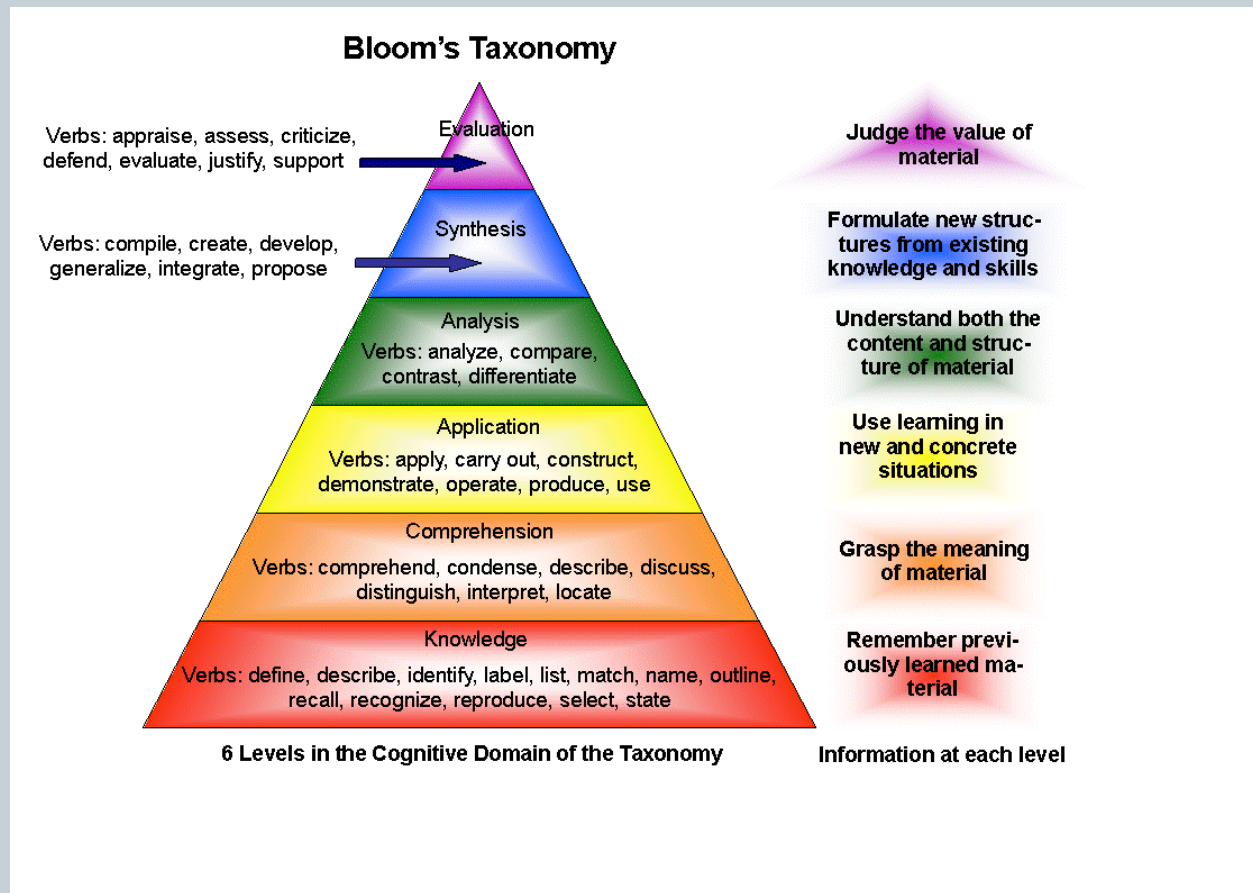
B. Academic

- a. Learning objectives
- b. Learning outcomes (i.e. list of competencies that the successful students should attain)
- c. Description of how the course will be taught (e.g. lecture, lab, lecture/lab, distance, etc.)
- d. Statement on how the students will be evaluated (e.g. class participation, assignments, exams, papers)
- e. Use of library and other information resources
- f. Reference to university policies (Grade Appeals, Student Code of Ethics)
- h. Provisions for special needs students
- g. Other relevant information

Course-Based Student Learning Outcomes



Back to the process: Review Program Goals
Review Program Student Learning Outcomes. Review Curriculum Map



Course Based Student Learning Outcomes – Mapping to Program Goals and Program SLOs



Freshman English 1 – *Subject to Change*

Program Goals	Program Student Learning Outcomes	Course-Based Student Learning Outcomes
<p>Program Goal 4: <i>Develop articulate, conscientious leaders and problem solvers who are committed to contributing to their fields and society.</i></p>	<p>4.1 Produce and deliver written and oral presentations, and communicate with specialists and non-specialists using appropriate media and technology. (B)</p>	<p>a. Recognize and adhere to AUA’s standards for academic excellence and integrity. b. Express ideas and opinions orally and in writing with increased confidence, fluency, and accuracy. c. Produce writing including well-structured paragraphs, letters, and short narrative essays (1-3 pages) using the different stages of the writing process, including choosing a topic, brainstorming, outlining, drafting, soliciting feedback, revising, and editing.</p>
	<p>4.2 Think critically and creatively, conceptualizing real-world problems from different perspectives. (B)</p>	<p>d. Identify perspectives and values of author, speaker, or oneself and intended audience(s).</p>
	<p>4.3 Work productively in diverse teams and solve problems collaboratively. (B)</p>	<p>e. Contribute to class discussions by actively and respectfully listening and sharing ideas and opinions. f. Reflect upon one’s own work and contribution to the class and identify action steps for improvement. g. Provide constructive feedback on written work and class participation.</p>
<p>Program Goal 5: <i>Provide students with a broad foundation of knowledge and skills and cultivate a commitment to life-long learning.</i></p>	<p>5.1 Use common software and information technology to pursue inquiry relevant to their academic and professional fields, and personal interests. (B)</p>	<p>h. Identify and utilize library and library resources to find information relevant to coursework.</p>
	<p>5.2 Weigh evidence and arguments, and appreciate and engage in diverse modes of inquiry characteristic of historical, cultural, political, economic, and quantitative disciplines. (B)</p>	<p>i. Summarize and evaluate opinions and arguments made by a range of speakers and identify which ones are well-reasoned and well-supported.</p>
	<p>5.3 Properly document and synthesize existing scholarship and data, keep current with developments, conduct independent research, and discover and learn new material on their own. (B)</p>	<p>j. Identify and utilize university resources including the library, Center for Academic Excellence, and writing lab that support academic and personal discovery, development, and autonomy (e.g. build vocabulary, study skills, note-taking, writing enrichment, information retrieval). k. Paraphrase, quote, cite and synthesize information and arguments from different sources.</p>

Draft a Course Outline



A schedule of topics for each week.

Topics or content noted in the course description.

Topics or content identified in benchmarking.

How might they best fit together?

Pay attention to **course description, curriculum map**, program goals and student learning outcomes, and **university mission statement, benchmarking**.

Assignments and Assessment



Are the assessment methods **aligned** with student learning outcomes?

Are the assessment methods **varied**? (Do students have ample ways to demonstrate learning?)

Are the assignments **weighted** appropriately?

What assessment tools will be used (rubrics)?

Do you provide **formative** and **summative** assessment to students? How often?

Is there an opportunity for students to provide feedback to the instructor?

Assignments and Assessment



Pay attention to the possible need to **scaffold**.

If you expect students to write a research paper, ask yourself, “do students know how to write a research paper.” Would mini-assignments be useful?

Again. The process. The **curriculum map** is a good place to start and reviewing **course descriptions** and syllabi for any prerequisites and follow up courses.

Draft Syllabus



- Ask faculty members to review and provide feedback - especially those who teach prerequisites and follow-up courses
- Go back to the **process** and review:
 - AUA Mission
 - Program Goals and Program Student Learning Outcomes
 - Course Description
 - Curriculum Map
 - Course-Based Student Learning Outcomes (Alignment)
 - Assignments and Assessment Methods (Alignment)
 - Policy on Course Syllabus Format and Syllabus Template

Final Syllabus



Review with program chair and/or dean

Remember:

A Syllabus is a **basic assessment** tool. Syllabi help students be active learners by clearly defining expectations, and aligning goals and student learning outcomes.

Where can you turn for resources and support?



Program Chair

Dean

Office of Assessment/IRO/Accreditation

Online resources

One on one (or group) support