

# THE INGREDIENTS OF COURSE AND UNIT PLANNING

## TEACHER IDENTITY

- passion, strengths, goals/values, wish-lists, force of personality
- my story - personal & cultural narratives
- influence of other educators, peers, and supervisors, network
- influence from students (e.g. what you think you've learned from them that will influence current or future learning design)
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## CURRICULUM

- Curriculum Goals & Rationale documents
- Curriculum Core Competencies
- Curriculum Big Ideas
- Curriculum Curricular Competencies
- Curriculum Content Standards
- how much or little, where to put it and why
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## WHAT ELSE?

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## VALUES & PEDAGOGY

- educator beliefs (e.g. what is this course about)
- educational or developmental theory (e.g. attachment, inquiry-based approach, growth mindset, constructivism, Bloom's taxonomy, pedagogy of the oppressed)
- First Peoples Principles of Learning and/or variants
- BC College of Teachers Standards
- values of inquiry (clarity, accuracy, precision, depth, coherence, breadth)
- Universal Design for Learning, backwards design, differentiation
- cognitive skills (e.g. interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, metacognition)
- Wholistic Learning Intentions (over/above or complimentary to official curriculum)
- multiple intelligences & learning styles (teaching style)
- notions of actualization & world-views (what kinds of humans are we making, what do I believe about students)
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## STRUCTURES & ROUTINES

- start and end points (e.g. content, timeline)
- norms & expectations
- hook(s) - overarching/ongoing vs set of daily prompts
- kinds and number of lessons (dividing a unit into parts)
- pedagogical balance (talk vs read vs move vs view, etc.)
- matching learning resources (old & traditional vs newer & tested vs newest & experimental); funded vs unfunded, supported vs unsupported
- design for quick engagement (cool) vs depth or importance
- classroom traditions or habit-forming practices (for teachers and students)
- style and expression options for students (e.g. multimodal)
- flex time, pacing for lesson elements
- question techniques, varied methods for encouraging response
- backup activities, go-bag for subs
- assignment design, digital or print support (e.g. handouts)
- making space for all voices, perhaps starting by considering Indigenous learners, ELL learners, aiming for equity
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## CONTEXT - STUDENTS

- the range of abilities & strengths, disabilities & challenges (learning and behavioural), IEPs, adapt vs modify -- understood? funded? supported?
- socio-economic and cultural realities/vulnerabilities
- energy level, cohesion, baggage/history, collective personality
- inventory of interests, passions, inclinations, skill sets, parent support
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## CONTEXT - SPATIAL

- factors that influence social-emotional and self-regulatory systems
- embedded (spatially oriented) classroom management strategies
- indigenizing spaces - environments of care, inclusion, mindfulness, and paying attention to the needs of the body, mind, and soul
- social contexts: individual, group, student vs teacher led, guests
- environmental contexts: indoor vs outdoor, class, library, lab, gym
- classroom design: desks, tables, configuration, patterns (cf "Pattern Language"), walls & shelves, Reggio-inspired, order vs chaos, "feng shui"
- strategies for clean & safe work areas
- spaces for social contexts: individual, group, student vs teacher led
- community and place-conscious opportunities, and guests!
- environmental contexts: indoor vs outdoor, class, library, lab, gym
- classroom design: desks, tables, configuration, patterns
- classroom presence: where is the teacher, why there
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## ASSESSMENT

- formative (formal/informal) & summative assessment
- entry level & pre/post assessments
- performance standards/rubrics/proficiency scales
- reflection cycle for students and teacher
- real-world/authentic assessment
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## Values of Inquiry — supporting questions<sup>1</sup>

### Clarity

- Are your examples useful?
- Is your argument structure clear?
- Are your diagrams easy to understand?
- Is your paragraph structure well-developed?
- Are your words well-defined and unambiguous?

### Accuracy

- Is your argument sound?
- Are your claims justified?
- Is what you are saying true?
- Have you represented ideas faithfully?
- How could people check on your claim?

### Precision

- Is your attention to detail sufficient?
- Have you used technical terms appropriately?
- Have you quantified your information where appropriate?
- Are any bullet points categorically distinct from each other?
- Have you identified areas of vagueness or ambiguity in your topic?

### Relevance

- Have you focussed on the point at issue?
- Have you selected information supporting the topic?
- Have you minimized distracting or unhelpful information?
- Have you been able to identify why information is relevant?
- Have you justified why your selection of material is relevant?

### Significance

- Have you avoided superficial issues or arguments?
- Have you identified and developed your core ideas?
- Has your analysis identified the most significant areas?
- Have you identified the most meaningful aspects of your topic?
- Has your treatment of the topic focused on substantive aspects?

### Depth

- Are the complexities of the issue sufficiently described?
- Have you been thorough in your treatment of the issue?
- Are your analogies effective and your generalizations well-justified?
- Do your arguments consider premises that are themselves conclusions?
- Have the problematic aspects of the issue been identified and dealt with?

### Breadth

- Have you avoided using logical fallacies?
- Have you avoided contradicting statements?
- Are your ideas developed in a logical manner?
- Do all your premises support your conclusions?
- Have you used transition phrases to identify logical progressions?

### Coherence (Logic)

- Have you considered alternative perspectives?
- Have you represented a broad range of alternative views?
- Why have you preferenced one perspective over another?
- Have you sought out others for the purpose of testing your ideas?
- Has your breadth of treatment allowed you to synthesis a new perspective?

<sup>1</sup> Retrieved Feb 27, 2018 from <http://www.ctp.uq.edu.au/content/resources-and-pedagogical-framework>. Values of inquiry modified from "Intellectual Standards" of Elder, L. and R. Paul (2001). "Critical Thinking: Thinking with Concepts." *Journal of Developmental Education* 24(3). © UQCTP University of Queensland Critical Thinking Project. Peter Ellerton University of Queensland, Australia