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A Tool for Curriculum Integration and Assessment: Curriculum Maps

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To help Faculty make better curricular decisions, philosophical, programmatic, and pragmatic, Deans need to help Faculty understand the curriculum as a whole. Rather than seeing a theological curriculum as a series of topical courses, the mission of the seminary is best served when Faculty understand the academic curriculum as an integrated, goal-oriented, outcomes-focused, “program of study.”

One helpful tool for communicating the curriculum as a “program of study” is the curriculum map. A curriculum map is a tool for assessing scope and coverage of elements in the explicit curriculum. A curriculum map can depict coverage of cognates, themes, methodology, topics, or other components that are considered important enough to be explicit parts of the student’s learning experience. Maps can reveal strengths and emphases in the scope of the curriculum, and, can depict points and degrees of integration. These maps can also reveal gaps in coverage in the scope of the curriculum.

Here are examples of three kinds of curriculum maps: (1) degree program goals, (2) thematic concepts, and (3) methodology. The maps plot where, and to what extent, individual courses address explicit facets of study across the curriculum.

The degree goals program map: depicts the relative strengths where the degree program goals are addressed throughout the curriculum. This map helps identify the extent of coverage, integration, and gaps. This sample program goals curriculum map from Central Generic

Theological Seminary (a fictitious school) shows (1) the three major curriculum goals (right hand column) with supportive derivative goals, (2) a listing of the implicit courses in the three theological cognate areas that make up the course of study, and (3) a graphic plotting of the degree of relative correlation emphasis of each goal within individual courses. Seen as a whole, the map depicts (1) the coverage of the degree program goals across the curriculum, (2) potential "gaps" in the course of study, and (3) points of integration across the curriculum. Click to Download (1) Mapping Goals sample curriculum goals maps.

GOALS

MAP

DOCUMENT

CENTRAL GENERIC THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Curriculum Map: Program Goals

Course	I. Critical/assess			II. Compare/contrast basic ministerial skills						III. Integrate skills and apply in ministerial setting						KCVS Code Key: H High correlation/primary focus M Moderate correlation/secondary focus L Low correlation/tertiary/occasional focus (blank) Not addressed/absent or de-emphasized			
	1A	1B	1C	2A	2B	2C	2D	2E	2F	2G	3A	3B	3C	3D	3E		3F	3G	3H
HT210 Religious Authority																			Degree Program Goals: 1. Be able to understand the ministry, understand the process of discernment within the framework of spiritual and ministerial formation. 2. Be able to understand the ministry, understand the process of discernment. 3. Be able to integrate the skills listed in the previous goals and apply them to specific ministerial settings. Directions: Using this table identify the strength of each degree program goal for each of the courses listed. Consult the previous column for course information, identify which level learning objectives, identify course materials, and return course descriptions for correlation of each goal. If there is no goal address of goal or if the goal does not apply to the course, leave the cell blank.
HT216 Problem of Evil																			
HT222 Critique of Christianity																			
HT2610 Introduction to Christian Mission																			
HT2612 Mission/Immersion Experience																			
HT2620 Christian Responses to Terrorism																			
HT2630 Perspectives on Global Christian Movements																			
HT2650 World Religions																			
HT2651 African Traditional Religions																			
MINISTRY STUDIES																			
M3110 The Ministry of Preaching																			
M3117 Biblical Preaching for Today's Congregation																			
M3124 Narrative Preaching																			
M3140 Preaching in a Postmodern World																			
M3204 Exploring Ministerial Identity																			
M3211 Intro to Christian Spirituality																			
M3216 Ministers as Spiritual Guides and Vocational Leaders																			
M3220 Longing for God: Classics in Christian Spirituality																			
M3222 Spiritual Autobiographies																			
M3224 Praying on Planet Earth																			
M3226 Wilderness Retreat																			
M3228 Sabbath Keeping																			
M3229 Celtic Spiritual Retreat																			
M3232 Changing Practices, Changing Work																			
M3271 Drama Production																			
M3272 Christian Ministry I & II																			
M3273 Christian Ministry (Internship) I & II																			
M3410 Basic Pastoral Care																			
M3412 Pastoral Care in Worship																			
M3413 Identity, Personal Development and Self-Care																			
M3420 Marriage and Family Counseling																			
M3421 Pastoral Care with Children and Youth																			
M3430 The Minister and Crisis Counseling																			
M3431 Pastoral Care of Difficult Relationships																			
M3440 Clinical Pastoral Care I & II																			
M3448 Pastoral Counseling Practicum																			
M3452 Ministering in Grief Loss and Difficult Death																			
M3464 Pastoral Care of Difficult Relationships																			

The thematic concepts map: identifies themes, topics, and concepts related to the program of study. This sample curriculum map plots to what extent selected concepts are addressed in courses and across the curriculum. The map identifies forty six concepts in this school's M.Div. curriculum and plots their coverage across the course of study by a scale of relative strength (primary, secondary, moderate, minimal, incidental and "not addressed"). The graphic representation provides an interpretation of thematic coverage across the curriculum. Faculty can see topics that are well-covered, and those that are being neglected. Click to Download (2) Mapping Topics a sample curriculum thematic map.

THEMES

MAP

DOCUMENT

CENTRAL GENERIC THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Curriculum Map: Methods Used

Legend: 1= Primary 2= Secondary 3= Tertiary □ Not used

Course	Lecture	Research	Writing	Reading	Collaboration	Interview	Reflection	Project	Practicum	Art	Journal	Discussion	Online
CO001 Models of Biblical Interpretation	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
CO002 Topics in Biblical Interpretation	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
CO001 Biblical Interpretation in the Church I	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
CO002 Biblical Interpretation in the Church II	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
BT110 Intro Old Testament I & II	1	2	1	1	2			1				2	2
BT110 Humor in the Bible	1	2	1	1	2			1		1		2	2
BT120 Intro Biblical Hebrew I & II	1				1			1				2	2
BT120 Hebrew Readings	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
BT120 Gen	1	1	1	1	1			1		1		2	2
BT120 Judges	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
BT120 Jeremiah	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
BT120 The Message	1	1	1	1	1			1		1		2	2
BT210 Intro New Testament I & II	1	2	1	1				1				2	2
BT210 NT Greek I & II	1				2							2	2
BT220 The Gospel of John	1	1	1	1	1							2	2
BT220 Greek Readings in Acts	1	2	1	1	2			1				2	2
BT220 Acts (Eng)	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
BT220 Greek Readings in the Gospel of Mark	1	2	1	1	2			1				2	2
BT220 Women and New Testament Narratives	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
BT220 Christian Preaching about Jews and Judaism	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
HT210 Introduction to the Christian Tradition I & II	1	1	1	1	1			1		1		2	2
HT210 Creativity and Imagination: Women Leaders in Church	1	1	1	1	1			1		1		2	2
HT210 Classics of Christian Literature	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
HT210 Prayer in the Spirituality of the United Church	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
HT210 Christianity and the Rise of Islam	1	1	1	1	1			1		1		2	2
HT210 Monastic Roots in the Radical Reformation	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
HT210 The Reformation	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
HT210 Introduction to Christian Mission	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
HT210 Mission/Imperialism/Globalization	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
HT210 Christian Responses to Terrorism	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
HT210 Perspectives on Global Christian Movements	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
HT210 World Religions	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
HT210 African Traditional Religions	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
MS110 The Ministry of Preaching	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
MS117 Biblical Preaching to Today's Congregation	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
MS120 Narrative Preaching	1	1	1	1	1			1				2	2
MS200 Exploring Ministerial Identity	1	1	1	1	1			1		1		2	2

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Maps as Educational Tools Involving Faculty in the creation of a curriculum map helps instructors understand the curriculum as a whole, and to see where and how individual courses “fit” in the course of study. To implement this faculty development activity, create a blank curriculum map (program goals, methods, topics or concepts, etc.) and distribute to the faculty with instructions like:

“ Study each map to familiarize yourself with the instrument. On each map use the code to plot the degree to which your course addresses the elements being assessed. Be as accurate as you can. Remember that not every course will be able to, or is expected to, address every element on any map. The curriculum map is intended to help analyze and assess the curriculum as a whole.

“You may want to review your course syllabi to determine how overt each map element is identified (program goals, themes, and methodologies). If you plot something on the map because you “know in your head” that it fits, but you don’t see it identified in the syllabus, consider updating the syllabus so that it communicates, and aligns, overtly the curricular elements you plot.

“Once you have completed plotting your courses on the map pass it along to another professor in your discipline area. Consider working together with one or more colleague as you identify and plot the components on each map. Once all professors in your area complete the map please return it to the Dean.”

Once you compile the input from faculty members, publish and review the maps as a Faculty.

Offer prompts for discussion such as:

- How well do the courses in our curriculum provide “coverage” of the various facets of the program of study?
- How effectively do our courses, taken together, interpret and address the curriculum goals?
- What areas and foci do we cover most in our curriculum?
- Are there “gaps” in our coverage of important curriculum goals, facets, or methods?

<https://wabashcenter.wabash.edu/2013/11/a-tool-for-curriculum-integration-and-assessment-curriculum-maps/>