

# Designing your courses for the revised Core: A suggested time-saving approach

This suggestion is based on (a) what we are asked to produce as part of the Core curriculum review process, (b) literature on course design, and (c) knowing how hard it can be to reconstruct plans if you implement a course two years after you propose it.

## Part 1: Familiarization

WHAT'S INVOLVED	CETL SUGGESTIONS	RESOURCES FOR YOU
1a. Specific requirements (last 2 pages of proposal doc) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Description</li> <li>Notes and guidelines</li> <li>How objectives should be addressed within the course</li> </ul>	Jot down key points, e.g. (Mod II, Theology) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Description/Notes: (a) intro to theology; (b) Christian theology, incl. Catholic &amp; Jesuit tradition; exploring key issue/person/text; reflection on spiritual perspective.</li> <li>Addressed: examine Christian foundations &amp; own beliefs; intro to theology as a discipline; improve writing skills; consider value &amp; justice.</li> </ul>	Core: "Proposal to Create a New Core Course" (last 2 pages)
1b. Essential pedagogies (in Section IV) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The items that absolutely MUST happen in the course (mostly relating to graded work)</li> </ul>	Jot down a summary, e.g. (Mod III, Global Challenge) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Major paper/project</li> <li>Reflection/synthesis of prior course learning</li> <li>Translation/application of knowledge to public or civic context</li> </ol>	Core: "Proposal to Create a New Core Course" (Section IV)

## Part 2: Constructive alignment

WHAT'S INVOLVED	CETL SUGGESTIONS	RESOURCES FOR YOU
2a. Consider "Required learning objectives" (Section IV): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What do they ask students to demonstrate?</li> <li>How might you convey that to students?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examples: On successful completion of this course, you will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrated careful, analytic reading of primary texts (Module I, Humanities)</li> <li>assessed the soundness of arguments using logical analysis and reasoned dialogue (Module II, Philosophy)</li> <li>used rigorous scientific thinking to answer questions and solve problems (Module III, Natural Sciences)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Avoid the verbs "understand," "comprehend," "appreciate," "develop"; instead focus on how the objectives are <i>demonstrated</i> by students.</li> <li>Address the student as "you" (to build rapport)</li> </ul>	<p>CETL: "2001 Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy"</p> <p>CETL: "Learning objectives: Examples from various disciplines"</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Try, wherever possible, to use wording that you can copy directly into the syllabus, i.e. designed for students to read, rather than for a committee. (Saves you time, helps keep the tone warm.)</li> </ul>	
2b.	<p>Align graded work to objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sketch out the kinds of graded work students will complete to demonstrate that they meet each objective</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is usually an iterative process between refining the wording of objectives (2a) and refining your plans for graded work (2b).</li> <li>Create assignments that you LOOK FORWARD to reading/seeing and that you think students will enjoy writing/presenting/performing/creating.</li> <li>Consider how students might demonstrate (a) content knowledge, (b) intellectual skills, (c) subject-specific skills, and (d) transferable skills (i.e. interpersonal, intrapersonal, and technical skills)</li> <li>One element of graded work may accomplish more than one objective (plus essential pedagogies), so LOOK FOR ECONOMIES, rather than overloading students with too many assignments (which leads to a “surface approach” to learning.</li> </ul>	CETL: “Linking learning objectives to graded work”
2c.	<p>Align learning and teaching activities (LTAs) to objectives and graded work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sketch out the types of in- and out-of-class LTAs students will do to help them prepare for assignments and achieve the learning outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aim for a variety of LTAs to help students build up a rounded repertoire of learning skills.</li> <li>Consider ways to develop students’ (a) content knowledge, (b) intellectual skills, (c) subject-specific skills, and (d) transferable skills (i.e. interpersonal, intrapersonal, and technical skills)</li> </ul>	CETL: “Linking learning objectives to learning and teaching activities (LTAs)”

### Part 3: Filling in the detail

	WHAT’S INVOLVED	CETL SUGGESTIONS	RESOURCES FOR YOU
3a.	<p>Check Essential pedagogies (Section IV)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Copy and paste from the “Required learning objectives” section</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the detail is under “Required learning objectives,” you can keep it brief!</li> </ul>	Core: “Proposal to Create a New Core Course” (Section IV)
3b.	<p>Context: Detailed description (Section III)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide enough detail for the review committee to see how the course fits together and meets requirements</li> <li>Provide enough detail to remind you in 2 years what you meant today.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Probably the longest section</li> <li>Refer back to Part 1 of process: be sure the course fits the “Description,” “Notes and guidelines,” explains the topic, content, and basic design.</li> <li>The more info you provide here, the easier it will be for the review committee and the more time you’ll save later.</li> </ul>	Core: “Proposal to Create a New Core Course” (last 2 pages)