Some principles of curriculum design - setting the scene

Dai John
School of Pharmacy
Cardiff University

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Learning Objective

To introduce, remind and/or raise awareness of some of the issues to consider when designing, developing or reviewing a curriculum.

**NOT** a quick guide to designing a curriculum

**NOR**

http://l-userpic.livejournal.com/48701162/506904
Context

• This outline session may be of particular use to those who are new to curriculum design, development and review.

• Many of the issues will also be of some relevance to developing or reviewing a unit, module or other component of a programme.
Pharmacy curricula: teaching today for tomorrow's practice

• Is there a ‘core’ UG pharmacy curriculum?
• How do we allow for country-to-country differences in professional practice?
• What is the appropriate balance of science and practice?
• An integrated curriculum? Traditional format or PBL?
• How much experiential learning should be included?
• How should interprofessional learning be incorporated?
• Do distance learning courses equip students equally compared to on-campus courses?
• Should pre-registration/intern/resident training be incorporated in the undergraduate curriculum?
• Postgraduate curricula and advancing practice?
The Curriculum - 1

Includes syllabus but is more, much more incl.

• learning, teaching & assessment methods
• their sequencing and timing
• what is expected of student; what student can expect
• what learner experiences to achieve outcomes

Further
• communicated
• evidence-based
• often contested
• must be responsive to change
The Curriculum - 2

• Planned (on paper, by designers)
• Delivered (organised & taught)
• Experienced (by learners)

Curriculum Drift
Many are guilty to greater or lesser extent
For whom is the course designed?

• **Level**
  - UG eg year 1
    - foundation
    - standard entry
    - graduate entry
  >1 of above
  - Masters eg MSc
  - PharmD

• **Background of entrants** incl.
  qualifications/grades, knowledge/experience
**Level 8  PhD / PharmD**
make a significant and original contribution to a specialised field of inquiry, demonstrating a command of methodological issues and engaging in critical dialogue…

**Level 7  MSc / MPharm**
display mastery of a complex and specialised area of knowledge and skills, employing advanced skills to conduct research, or advanced technical or professional activity…

**Level 6  BSc / BPharm / Grad Diploma**
critically review, consolidate and extend a systematic and coherent body of knowledge, utilising specialised skills across an area of study; critically evaluate concepts and evidence from a range of sources; transfer and apply diagnostic and creative skills and exercise significant judgement in a range of situations…
Governance & Regulation

University
Regulator
Government

Modular, credit size, course length, entry requirements, study hours (in & out of class), level, progression rules, etc.

Accreditation Criteria
Complexity with eg 2+2 programmes (2 HEIs and 2 accrediting bodies)
Content
The syllabus

Communication Skills

Communication Skills (8hrs)

Communication Skills lectures (8hrs)
Beyond Content

• Funding (student numbers)
• Faculty & support staff
• Learning environment – teaching & learning space, IT
• Timetable (white space)
• Assessment & Feedback
• Integration
• Placements (exposure to practice)
• IPL
Is the ‘course’ constructively aligned?*

a) Learning activities & assessment tasks are aligned with each other and with intended outcomes.

b) Many students ‘construct’ meaning from what they do to learn.

* John Biggs, 1999
Miller’s Triangle

- Knowledge, understanding
- Skills, performance
- Attitudes, behaviours, values

Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs - 1

The concept is that until each preceding need has at least largely been met then the next need does not manifest itself.

www.teamtechnology.co.uk/tt/g-articl/maslow.gif
http://www.arrod.co.uk/archive/concept_maslow_hierarchy.php
Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs - 2

The concept is that until each preceding need has at least largely been met then the next need does not manifest itself.

www.teamtechnology.co.uk/tt/g-articl/maslow.gif
http://www.arrod.co.uk/archive/concept_maslow_hierarchy.php
Spiral Curriculum

Definition:

A spiral curriculum is one in which students repeat the study of a subject at different levels, each time at a higher level of difficulty and/or in greater depth.*

* adapted from http://www.education.com
Spiral Curriculum - medicine

http://www.dundee.ac.uk/museum/_lib/img/medical/spiral.jpg
Strategic Planning

Political
Economic
Social
Technical
Legal
Environmental

Strengths
Weaknesses
Opportunities
Threats

Consultation
Implementation

Steps post-project: Monitor & Review
Stakeholders

Identifying, engaging & feeding back

- faculty/staff
- current, past & future students
- trainers & employers of graduates
- pharmacy profession
- other professions
- patients/public
- university (? other schools, faculties)
- regulator
- professional bodies
Understanding Change

Kubler-Ross Change (grief) Curve (1983)

Shock
Fear
Anger
Frustration or Despair
Denial
[Active Resistance]
Acceptance
Understanding
Learning & Adapting
Integrating & Developing
Moving on
Comfort zone

Time

Morale & Competence
Evaluation … by ?

• Outcomes appropriate & realistic
• Content appropriate
• Meaningful organisation & sequencing
• Alignment of Assessment with L&T
• Balance of methods (learning preferences)
• Assessed at appropriate level

• **Time for learning**
• Teaching staff – approp. knowledge/skills
• Learning resources & environment approp.
In summary, may wish to consider

- Communicate and actively engage with colleagues & other stakeholders (and feedback) throughout development
- Do **not** underestimate the time & effort required for large-scale change(s)
- Listen to alternative views
- if it ain’t broke why fix it? **not** a reason NOT to embark
- Is the product deliverable? approve-able?
- Strong leadership from top and elsewhere
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