



The Ultimate Guide to

# Creating the Perfect Curriculum for Higher Ed



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Perfection may seem unattainable. Some people chase the perfect car, the perfect job, or the perfect house without ever meeting their goal. Fortunately, creating the perfect curriculum for higher ed is possible with these steps.

# Outcomes and Objectives

# 1. Outcomes and Objectives

First, begin with clear course objectives and student outcomes. The objectives and outcomes must correlate clearly because the outcomes prove the objectives were met. Objectives describe what the professor will teach while outcomes are how the learners will demonstrate they have learned the material or mastered a skill. When planning the perfect curriculum, it helps to think of the end result first: After learners complete this course, what should they have learned and how can they prove it?

One example of an objective for a Biology 101 course might be, "Gain knowledge of the process of mitosis." Since the outcome is related to the objective and should be demonstrable, a good outcome might be, "Learners will complete a diagram of mitosis." A correct diagram proves the learner met the objective of gaining knowledge about mitosis.

Of course, an even better outcome would require higher level thinking, such as analysis. "Learners will analyze a diagram of mitosis to identify the errors in the process."



**Know Your  
Audience**

## 2. Know your audience

After writing the course objectives and outcomes, the typical learner's needs should be considered. Novices in a field will require additional lessons and support. Experienced learners should already have a handle on the basics and may benefit from in-depth lessons.

Asking a few simple questions can help understand what the typical learner for a course needs. Does the learner already know something about cells? Or does the learner need a lesson on what cells are and what they do?

Considering learners' needs may alter the objectives and outcomes, and that's okay. The objectives and outcomes should reflect the reasons learners want to take a course. Designing the perfect curriculum for higher ed requires revision.



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# Process

### 3. Process

The third step focuses on the logical order of addressing the objectives and outcomes. The length of the course and how it's delivered also affect order.

Shorter courses will have accelerated schedules. Full semester courses can take the metaphorical scenic route. Either way, the topics and activities should build on each other, using the skills and knowledge learned from each previous lesson.

It's important to keep the learner in mind with organizing tasks and topics. What may seem like a logical step for an expert may not be for a novice. What hierarchy of objectives and outcomes supports the learner best? Again, objectives and outcomes may need to be revised to meet learners' needs.

A blue pen with silver-colored accents is positioned diagonally across a stack of yellow sticky notes. The top sticky note is slightly offset, revealing the one underneath. The entire scene is set against a solid yellow background.

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# Chunking

## 4. Chunking

Learners retain information if it is chunked. This means breaking down difficult concepts into smaller pieces. If learners are exposed to smaller bits of a bigger idea rather than the big idea all at once, they stand a better chance of understanding the entire concept.

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Once again, what may seem like a normal amount of information for an experienced learner may be overwhelming for a beginner. One way to avoid this is to break topics into 10-minute segments. Learners will have a better chance of understanding and absorbing information in short periods of time.

This step may inspire additional revision of objectives and outcomes to create the perfect chunks for learners.

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# Content

## 5. Content

There are thousands of textbooks on the market and even more digital resources online. Even with those ready-made materials, customized content may support objectives and outcomes better.

Ideally, curriculum design dictates content. A popular or an affordable textbook may support the curriculum, but it shouldn't dictate the curriculum. The objectives and outcomes designed to support students should inform course design.

Educational institutions can create their own content to meet learners' needs. A Pass Education can help create the materials and activities to maximize learning.

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**Revise as Needed**

## 6. Revise as Needed

Revise, revise, revise. Revision promotes improvements and effectiveness. Creating the perfect curriculum for higher ed is methodical, but it includes the opportunity to revise. It also inspires insight into various learners' journeys.

Any insight into the learning process can inspire improved curriculum design, which will result in higher success for learners and increased retention. When the focus is on creating the best curriculum possible for the learner, then everyone benefits. Though it may seem that revision is a step backwards, it's actually a leap forwards.

## Conclusion

Perfection isn't achieved in an instant. Creating the perfect curriculum for higher education requires clear and measurable goals and an eye on learners' needs. A Pass has the expertise to design the perfect curriculum for any higher ed course.

## About A Pass

A Pass Educational Group, LLC is an organization dedicated to the development of quality educational resources. We partner with publishers, K-12 schools, higher ed institutions, corporations, and other educational stakeholders to create custom quality content.

**Have questions? Contact Us to discuss your next project:**

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