

Curriculum Matters:
“Common Core ELA Standards-Aligned
Curriculum Development with Understanding by Design”

Instructor: Katherine Scheidler, Ed.D.

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Course Number: PRDV70228

Credit Hours: 1

This curriculum course is open to all content areas and all grade levels, including teachers of special education and English language learners

Please see Instructor Profile, p. 6

Course Description

Curriculum is the foundation for learning. Curriculum sets out the school year’s path to ensure the needed skills and understandings, and helps keep us on track over the year. Written curriculum is essential as a document to guide and share in an era of stringent accountability. Revising from year to year can then improve this guide. When a year-long course of learning understandings is developed in line with grade level MA Standards and to meet student needs, then unit plans and lesson plans follow this more long-term guide for developing student learning. Year-long goals help guide the teacher and students to outcomes needed for today’s high expectations that we want each student to achieve. Day-to-day practice follows from and builds to the longer term plan. When we have long-term goals, students have a sense of direction. Then, excellent, carefully developed big

idea questions the students can connect with, such as “What makes a true hero?” or “What are values to live by?” can drive and engage students in the year-long work and units.

Curriculum provides the basic underpinnings to follow at a grade level. Ideally, teachers of a content area and grade level confer and to create and follow a similar guide, but with respect for individual initiative. Grade level curriculum means that all students have a similar learning experience at that grade.

But curriculum is dynamic. No longer is curriculum carved in stone or left in a binder in a dark corner or bottom drawer to collect dust. When we develop and bring alive in the classroom planned curriculum, new ideas are sparked, and we can learn from one another to modify thinking. What’s best for our students? What works? How can we adjust curriculum to best build learning?

In this course, we’ll review varied curriculum models to find advantages and limitations of different formats. We’ll also explore the concepts of the “Understanding by Design” unit plan model, to provides more specific unit facets within the curriculum. We’ll seek user-friendly, readable curriculum formats.

In today’s world of intense accountability, we count on the previous year’s teachers to build understandings for our own teaching year. Next year’s teacher counts on us to develop understandings to pave the way for their work. Therefore, another reason to have strong written curriculum available for others to see is that this is how we can view the planned learning for last year’s work, and next year’s work, to build on skills for high achievement, and to avoid repetition!

Course Objectives

Course participants will be able to

- Review curriculum models and assess for ease of readability and accessibility and note needed facets of curriculum plan
- Read articles and chapters to gain understanding of the value of curriculum planning and development
- Develop understanding of the need for planning while also modifying work based on student needs
- Understand grade level Standards and integrate Standards into a curriculum learning plan

Course Expectations

The course is a collaborative four week online learning experience for teachers. Course goal is to understand the rationale and practice of big picture learning goals as spelled out in curriculum development, curriculum writing, formatting, and revisions as needed. Determining the best format for one's purpose is the first important step. Who is the curriculum for? We'll also discuss Standards learning and multiple active student learning activities. We'll problem-solve together on teaching and learning issues. The course goal is developing means of helping all students achieve at high levels. The tone of the course is collegial and collaborative, and you'll share your thoughts and the results of your work with your course colleagues to help one another generate ideas for lessons, teaching materials, and the sweep of a year-long curriculum.

All course material is posted on the course BlackBoard site. Course participants will spend time each week reading articles, participating in the discussion threads, and posting assignments to the class collaboration space. To make our course interactive, so that we all learn from one another in a rich learning environment, please post in response to at least two others' postings each week. As a final project, participants will submit a year-long curriculum outline using a format provided or instructor approved, along with one Understanding by Design unit plan, that all align with this course's materials, readings, videos, discussions, and objectives.

Assignments completed in the first three weeks may be incorporated into these final plans. The course is designed so that weekly postings and discussion points can be incorporated into the final project. See course assessment rubric, p. 7.

Course Materials

Required reading (both texts are short!):

Heidi Hayes Jacobs, Mapping the Big Picture: Integrating Curriculum and Assessment K – 12. *Jacobs' brief classic "Mapping" discussion provides information on process and product view on curriculum.*

Katherine Scheidler, Standards Matter: The Why and What of Common Core Standards in Reading and Writing, NewSouth Books, 2015 *This rationale for Standards learning can be applied to any content area and teaching vision.*

Course Content and Outline

Week 1

Introductions: Who are we?

Theme: What is Curriculum? View postings of sample curricula to get a sense of varied curriculum formats

Discussion Question:

Which format do you like best, and why?

Assignment: For Week 2, please read chapters one, two, and four of Standards Matter on the history of Standards learning, and the rationale for common learning for all students. These chapters are "Why Standards Matter," "How Did We Get Here?" and "Happy Living in a Standards-Based World."

Week 2

Theme: Standards Learning

Readings:

- Review the posted Standards, including the 2016 DESE ELA Curriculum Framework
- Read chapters four through nine in Standards Matter on the specifics of MA literacy development Standards.

Discussion Question:

In your own words, state the rationale and advantages of Standards learning.

Assignment: Read for Week 3 Heidi Hayes Jacobs' Curriculum Mapping for understanding of curriculum development rationale, process, and product

Week 3

Theme: Understanding by Design

Read article distinguishing among curriculum mapping, curriculum maps and curriculum.

View youtube videos of Understanding by Design creator Grant Wiggins, who innovated the practice of Teaching for Understanding, the unique gold standard curriculum model of the Understanding by Design template for ease of developing unit learning plans along with ease of revision and updating to meet student needs and ensure Standards learning

View posted model units as examples of well developed UbD units

Reading: Read chapter three, Standards Matter, "Seeing What Our Students Can Do: One Model," for active student learning to develop

Standards learning, with technology integration, as an example of one best practice that develops student understanding.

Discussion questions:

1. In your own words, explain curriculum mapping, curriculum maps, curriculum.
2. Explain why it would be valuable for students in the chapter three activity to write a brief Argument or Essay piece on their research project, in addition to the web site

Assignment: From viewing model Understanding by Design unit plans, create one UbD unit incorporating the areas provided. First send to the instructor for approval for comments, then post in Discussion area. Comment on two other posted plans.

Week Four:

Theme: Final project of a one-year curriculum with one UbD unit

Assignment: Complete final curriculum outline project and at least one UbD unit for your grade level, send to instructor no later than Wednesday of the final week of the course, and after instructor review, please post on the Discussion site.

You may use the curriculum format provided, or develop your own curriculum format aligned with our course concepts, or use one of the curriculum examples provided for your final project.

Assessment

Please post responses to Discussion questions weekly, and respond to at least two other postings, to develop our learning among ourselves. Please keep an eye out for the instructor's posted responses also. In this brief course, please note the final project that is due the last week of the course and plan accordingly, as grades close on the Friday of the last week of the course. Contact the instructor via email any time with any questions. Course grade is based on 40% on discussion postings, 20% on Understanding by Design unit, and 40% on the final project.

Instructor Profile

Katherine Scheidler, Ed.D.

Dr. Katherine Scheidler taught English for over twenty-five years in Providence, RI, and served as English Department Chair. Her doctoral degree is from the School of Education, Boston University.



She has a graduate degree from the Harvard University Graduate School of Education in Curriculum and Instruction, and holds a Master of Arts in Teaching English degree from Brown University. Her undergraduate degree is from The American University, School of International Service, Washington, DC majoring in English and International Relations.

Dr. Scheidler served as clinical professor, Brown University Education Department, for eight years, teaching Methods of Teaching English and supervising all Brown seniors and graduate program Master of Arts in Teaching English student teachers, concurrent with her own public school teaching.

Dr. Scheidler has also served for over sixteen years as both Massachusetts Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Professional Development in Hopkinton and Canton, and also as central office Curriculum Director in districts of varied demographics and needs, including K – 12 English Language Arts Curriculum in Marblehead, and Curriculum Director, Hamilton-Wenham Regional District. She was most recently K – 12 ELA Director with the Everett Public Schools, a large urban district adjacent to Boston.

Kay has taught courses in curriculum, assessment and instruction as a National Faculty member in the Elementary Masters in Literacy program, Lesley University, Cambridge, and with The Education Collaborative, Dedham.

Scheidler is author, Standards Matter: The Why and What of Common Core State Standards in Reading and Writing, and currently working on her next book, Renegade Teacher: A View from the Trenches, on best practice in schools today.

Curriculum Matters Course Rubric Assessment to Guide and Assess Learning

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Let's Talk!
Discussions area posted comments are:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Show the week's content understanding and adds new thoughts *Insightful and helpful responses to others' postings *Posted in a timely fashion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Demonstrate good understanding of the week's content *Not always responding to others' postings *Posted on time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Lacks good understanding of the week's content *Late or no posting
UbD unit (Week 3)	Completes the facets of the UbD template with strong course content understanding and following the rubric provided	Completes UbD unit with adequate understanding of course content. Not full rubric completion.	Completes UbD Unit with weak or no understanding of course content Lacks rubric facts
Final project of year-long written Curriculum	Final curriculum has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Includes Standards learning *Facets completed in line with course best practices and concepts *Includes instructor-approved facets for outlining year-long learning *Responds insightfully and helpfully to others' curriculum postings, for useful advice sensitively constructed and phrased *Completed on time (or early) to allow time for instructor and peer review and comments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Adequate final Curriculum *Within approved format *Has some gaps in completion *Good comments on others' projects *Completed on time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Weak final Curriculum *Format not approved *Lacks comments on others' final project *Late work

FSU Technology Support

Contact the Technology Resource Center Service Desk by e-mailing it@framingham.edu or by calling 508-215-5906.

Contact the Education Technology Office by e-mailing eto@framingham.edu or by calling 508-626-4927.

FSU Academic Honesty Policy

“Integrity is essential to academic life. Consequently, students who enroll at Framingham State University agree to maintain high standards of academic honesty and scholarly practice. They shall be responsible for familiarizing themselves with the published policies and procedures regarding academic honesty.

Academic honesty requires but is not limited to the following practices: appropriately citing all published and unpublished sources, whether quoted, paraphrased, or otherwise expressed, in all of the student’s oral and written, technical and artistic work; and observing the policies regarding the use of technical facilities.

Infractions of the Policy on Academic Honesty include, but are not limited to:

1. Plagiarism: claiming as one’s own work the published or unpublished literal or paraphrased work of another. It should be recognized that plagiarism is not only academically dishonest but also illegal.
2. Cheating on exams, tests, quizzes, assignments, and papers including the giving or acceptance of these materials and other sources of information without the permission of the instructor.
3. Unauthorized collaboration with other individuals in the preparation of course assignments.
4. Submitting without authorization the same assignment for credit in more than one course.”

Please see the [FSU Graduate Catalog](#) p. 21-22 for full policy and further information.

Accommodations

“Framingham State University offers equal opportunities to all qualified students, including those with disabilities and impairments. The University is committed to making reasonable accommodations as are necessary to ensure that its programs and activities do not discriminate, or have the effect of discriminating, on the basis of disability. Academic Support serves students with learning and psychiatric disabilities as well as students with visual, mobility and hearing impairments.”

Please see the [Disability/Access Services website](#) for more information or contact LaDonna Bridges, Associate Dean of Academic Success, lbridges@framingham.edu .