

Course Planning: Part III

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In this final segment of the course planning lectures, we'll talk about how long you can expect the course development to take as well as provide some suggestions that can save you some time.

Course Production Timeline

- ▶ How much time?
- ▶ Time considerations
- ▶ Using the UF Standards and Markers of Excellence
- ▶ Using the worksheet

It is difficult to come up with a schedule for developing your course if you don't know how long certain aspects of the work will take. So we'll talk about how long it typically takes a faculty member to complete the various stages of work. You may already have some of the course work done, this will most likely be the case if you've taught the course before. We'll cover things that you'll want to think about as you put your timeline together.

While the UF Standards and Markers of Excellence do not directly affect your development schedule, it is a good idea to refer to them frequently—as a checklist to make sure that you aren't forgetting something.

We have provided you with a worksheet that can help you to organize your work, and we'll review how you might use that to save yourself some time.



At this point in time, you might be saying to yourself, “ They sure are wasting a lot of time on the planning phase. I don’t need that, I’ll just jump right in and create the course.” And, of course, you can certainly move forward without creating a schedule. However, that method tends to be less successful. You may have noticed that if you don’t schedule regular deadlines for yourself, the project ends up getting pushed back and then you have to work very long hours to complete the project before the start of classes—or you end up building the course as you are teaching it.

In order to produce the best course—one that will be easy for you to teach and provide the best learning experience for your students, give yourself a reasonable amount of time to do the work. “What is a reasonable amount of time?” you ask. . .

How Much Time?

- ▶ Time available
- ▶ Course start date
- ▶ New course?
- ▶ New material?
- ▶ Technology comfort level

So how long will all of this take? Unfortunately, there is no exact formula to figure out the answer to that question. It is largely going to depend on:

- The available time on the part of the course instructor or facilitator
- It will depend on when the course must begin
- If the course is brand new or being adapted
- How much material must be created
- Instructor familiarity with the technology and so on.

A rule of thumb is that the development of a new course for online delivery will take approximately 3 times longer than preparing for face to face. Why so much longer? Remember that you essentially have to “teach” the course prior to delivering it—that is prepare all the materials prior to the date a student steps his virtual foot into your class. You’ll also want to consider the best way to engage students. You’ll need some time for ideas to roll around in the back of your mind in order to incorporate them into your vision of the course.

Finally, you’ll save yourself a significant amount of time while you’re teaching the course, if you consider all of the problems students are likely to have with the assignments, and then answer those questions before they become questions.

Time Considerations

- ▶ Course start date
- ▶ How much time per week?



So as you develop a timeline for course development ask yourself the following questions:
Once I begin working on the course, how much time do I have before it must be launched?

If the course begins in “x” weeks, how much time am I willing to devote to working on the course per week?

Note that the answer to this questions may determine the practicality of launching the course on the desired date. If you cannot commit adequate time to the development process then the course will simply not be ready on time. It’s better to figure that out sooner rather than later in case you need to request assistance or discuss changing the start date with your department chair.

As stated previously, remember that course development will take about 3x longer for an online course than for a face-to-face course. However, this time will be gained back in the future.

Time Considerations

- ▶ Clear goals?
- ▶ Clear objectives?
- ▶ Existing material?
- ▶ Need for new material?
- ▶ Learning new technology?

You may already have a very good sense of the overall course goals and the individual objectives that will enable the students to reach those goals. This is particularly likely if you have taught the course before. You may already have this information in your syllabus.

If this is a new course, give yourself enough time to really put some thought into the goals and objectives. Since the entire course will be based upon this work—it is worth spending some time. The next module of this workshop will go over course goals and learning objectives in detail.

You may already have a significant amount of course material. THAT will certainly save you some time. But keep in mind that material that works well in a face-to-face classroom may need some modification to work well in the online setting. We'll be talking about that later in the Faculty Institute as well.

There may be some specific materials that you know will have to be created. Be sure to schedule yourself enough time for that—and remember, things generally take longer than you think they will.

How long it will take to create new materials will depend upon the technology you will be using. Be sure to schedule in some time for experimentation and testing. Save yourself some time by checking campus resources to see if there is help and/or training for the technologies you would like to use. At the very least, you may want to attend training sessions on how to use the course management system. Learning how to use the system

early can save you a great deal of frustration as you teach your course.

Example

- ▶ 1 semester (16 weeks) of development time
- ▶ Course has been taught face-to-face
- ▶ 50% of course material must be created from scratch
- ▶ Time available: the time normally devoted to teaching one course
- ▶ Instructor will need to learn some new technology

Let's look at a timeline for the development of a typical course. Let's assume that the instructor has gone through all of the questions and has decided on the following:

- We have 1 semester, or 16 weeks to develop the course. (In general—it is very difficult to develop a quality online course in less than one full semester's time. That isn't to say it cannot be done, but most faculty with a full teaching load find it extremely difficult.)
- We'll also assume This course has been taught face-to-face and is being adapted to a fully online course.
- We'll assume that 50% of the course materials need to be developed from scratch
- We'll assume that the instructor is willing to devote the time they normally devote to teaching one full course
- And lastly, we will assume that the instructor is familiar with the course management system, but will need a refresher on some of the tools and will be using at least one tool that is outside of the course management system.

Phase	Item	Target Date
Analysis	Determine student needs and strengths (Worksheet 1)	Wk 1
	Create learning objectives (Worksheet 3/4)	Wk 3
	Match assessments to learning objectives (Worksheet 3/4)	Wk 3
	Determine assessment grading criteria	Wk 4
Design	Identify instructional materials to support objectives	Wk 5
	Design assignments/activities to reach objectives	Wk 6
	Identify tools to support assignments/activities	Wk 6
	Determine multimedia needs	Wk 6
	Identify potential ADA issues	Wk 6
	Determine overall evaluation plan	Wk 6

This is a section from the sample planning worksheet. A link to this worksheet can be found below the link to this presentation.

Since this course has been taught before, we have a pretty good handle on the student needs and strengths and feel that the first worksheet about student needs and strengths can be completed in a week or less.

When creating your timeline be sure to allow time to let ideas ferment. This will help to keep you from "second guessing" yourself at the last minute as you will know that you have given a particular assignment or activity sufficient thought. Spend sufficient time on deciding what you want students to be able to do so that you are certain you have covered everything. These objectives are your foundation. Most faculty find that once the objectives are created, the supporting materials and assessment come fairly quickly.

We'll give ourselves another week to determine the grading criteria for our assessments which brings us up to week 4.

As the course has been taught before, we have a pretty good idea as to the instructional materials that we'll need, so those can be determined in a week's time. And we'll also be able to design our assignments and activities pretty quickly. We'll get some assistance from campus resources to identify tools to support these assignments and activities along with the multimedia needs. At the same time, we'll ask for help with the ADA compliance.

With the assessments pretty well in place, we can determine our overall evaluation plan. This brings us up to week 6 in our timeline. But Remember, that depending upon your individual course and circumstances, your dates are likely to be different.

Phase	Item	Target Date
Develop- ment	Identify all course elements	Wk 7
	Design course structure and organization	Wk 7
	Determine course layout and appearance	Wk 7
	Determine course grading scale	Wk 8
	Identify text and reading resources (identify materials requiring copyright clearance)	Wk 8
	Identify any external resources (videos, images, websites, readings etc.)	Wk 8
	Create presentation slides if used (PowerPoint or other)	Wk 9 - 10
	Record presentations (video, audio, or other)	Wk 11 - 14
	Create quiz questions (if being used)	Wk 11- 14
	Create Exam Questions	Wk 11 - 14
	Determine course deadlines	Wk 13
	Finalize course policies and syllabus	Wk 13
	Seek training in using the course management system (if needed)	As available
	Insert content into the course management system	Wk 14
	Create assignments and instructions	Wk 14
	Set up course management system tools	Wk 15
	Review entire course (click on every link, test every video)	Wk 15
	Ask colleague or TA to review entire course	Wk 16

Here we have divided the development tasks into the remaining 10 weeks. You'll notice that some of the items overlap each other. This may work for you, and it may not. Note that our sample schedule provides only 3 weeks for recording video presentations.


In our sample course, we are planning on 3 short 10-minute videos for each module. There will be 15 modules. So we'll need to schedule more than 7 and a half hours of recording time. We'll need extra time to figure out the technology and time in between each recording—so let's plan on a total of 15 hours spent in recording. That will be 5 hours each of the three weeks devoted to recording. Later in the Faculty Institute, we'll talk about recording formats and how to structure your presentations.

Remember that you'll need to give yourself realistic deadlines for each of these items. If the deadlines cannot be met, then you'll need to communicate with your department chair about whether it is possible to offer the course online during the proposed semester.

Note that the last item on the development list is to "ask a colleague or TA to review the entire course." Do not skip this step! It will save you a significant amount of time and frustration when you teach the course because they WILL catch things that you miss. They'll also be able to tell you what is clear and what is not. It is far better to clarify something before the class starts than wait until you have 20 e-mails asking you the same question.

This schedule may look a bit scary—just remember to take it one piece at a time. This

sample timeline is available in the link below this presentation. You can use it as a starting point, or you can start with the empty worksheet, or you can schedule your time using a calendar tool. Just remember that if you don't schedule the time, it is likely to slip away from you.

Phase	Item	Target Date
Implementation	Publish course and add roster	3 days before start
	Send out welcome e-mail to students	3 days before start
	Conduct course	Start!
Evaluation	Collect and review mid-semester survey, make updates if needed)	8 wks after start
	Collect and review final survey, revise course as needed	16 wks after start
	Review course questions discussion board, revise course as needed	18 wks after start
	Review grade distribution, revise course as needed	18 wks after start
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Your implementation date will be determined by the semester start date. You'll want to add your course roster and send out a welcome message to your students 3 days before the first day of classes. Then you'll teach your course as you have planned. It is a good idea to keep a journal of what you do each week as you teach the class. Make note of things that work well and not so well. It is easy to forget some of these things when you revise the course for the next semester.

Once the course has finished, be sure to set aside some time to review the surveys and course questions discussion board. You will also want to look at the grade distribution. Review your notes and determine the things you'll change for the next offering. Schedule the time you'll need to make these changes before the next offering of the course. And Do not forget to have a TA or colleague review the updated course prior to launch!

UF Standards & Markers of Excellence

- ▶ Course Overview and Introduction
- ▶ Course Goals and Learning Objectives
- ▶ Assessment and Measurement
- ▶ Instructional Materials
- ▶ Interaction and Engagement
- ▶ Course Technology
- ▶ Accessibility
- ▶ Course Design Evaluation

It is a good idea to review the UF Standards and Markers of Excellence throughout the development process. This document can serve as a checklist to remind you of best practices. In particular, you'll want to keep the Course Goals and Learning Objectives section in mind as you move through the analysis phase of the project. Many of the other items will be covered during development. And finally, you'll evaluate the course design each time you offer the course.

Take a look at the "Exemplary" items for areas that might lend themselves to greater innovation or engagement.

DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT WORKSHEET | SECTION 2

Use this worksheet to outline the tasks to be completed for each phase of the development process.

Phase	Item	Target Date
Analysis	Determine student needs and strengths (Worksheet 1)	
	Create learning objectives (Worksheet 3/4)	
	Match assessments to learning objectives (Worksheet 3/4)	
	Determine assessment grading criteria	
Design	Identify instructional materials to support objectives	
	Design assignments/activities to reach objectives	
	Identify tools to support assignments/activities	
	Determine multimedia needs	
	Identify potential ADA issues	
	Determine overall evaluation plan	
	Identify all course elements	
	Design course structure and organization	
	Determine course layout and appearance	
	Determine course grading scale	

Now it's your turn. Use the sample course worksheet that includes possible deadlines or the blank worksheet to map out the things you'll need to do to create your course. Don't worry about getting absolutely everything written down just yet. Just write down what occurs to you now. As we go through the Faculty Institute workshop, you'll probably want to make additions and changes. That's perfectly fine. Once you have completed the Faculty Institute workshop, you should have a realistic plan for your course development.



As you have probably noticed, there is a great deal of work involved in the course development process. Although it may seem daunting, a timeline for development will help to keep you on track to start your course on time. Remember that the timeline presented here is an example. You will need to look at your own schedule, time, and material constraints to make a schedule for your course development. If you are working with an instructional designer, that person will be able to help you to determine if your timeline is realistic and adequate. Don't forget to make use of campus resources to save you time.

While you're doing all of that work, remember that the time investment during the development of the course will:

- One, Reduce time in the future teaching of the course
- Two, Ensure that the course reaches its objectives
- And three, Set students up for success

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That completes the 3rd and final installment of the course planning lectures. I wish you luck as you continue you on through the Faculty Institute. Thank you.