



Syllabus Work Week

Communicating Logic and Alignment



Facilitator Team



Mascha N. Gemein

Associate Professor of
Practice

UCATT (Formerly OIA)

[Office Hours: 2-3 PM](#)



Treya Allen

DEI Instructional Support
Coordinator

Office of General
Education

[Office Hours: 3-4 PM](#)



Katie Southard

Director of Instructional
Support

Office of General
Education

[Office Hours: 12-1 PM](#)



Emily Jo Schwaller

Assistant Professor of
Practice

UCATT (Formerly OIA)

[Office Hours: 1-2 PM](#)



Honoring and
Acknowledging

Syllabus Work Week



Webinars:

- **Monday:** Communicating Logic and Alignment
- **Tuesday:** Composing with the Learner in Mind
- **Wednesday:** Increasing Equity and Transparency
- **Thursday:** Making Policies Meaningful for Students
- **Friday:** Guided Peer Review Session

Daily office hours 12-4pm:

- Sign-up for a 30min consultation alone, with a buddy, or as small group
- Link: [Office Hour Sign-Up](#)
- Zoom (same sessions): <https://arizona.zoom.us/j/89274956074>


Communicating Logic & Alignment



Your Syllabus is...

1. A teaching tool.
... assessed by your students
2. A component of your department's degree curriculum.
... assessed by your colleagues and administrators
3. A document in your teaching portfolio or dossier.
... assessed by search and promotion committees

It documents your scholarship of
teaching!



The Intentional Syllabus Defined

Being intentional about syllabus composition means we:

- Provide a clear road map for learning with aligned goals, checkpoints, and conditions.
- Center the learner and learning experience.
- Clearly communicate expectations on individuals and groups (if given).
- Being descriptive and transparent about conditions and process of weekly student engagement and the assessment.
- Meet diverse learners where they are at rather than to make assumptions about preparedness or familiarity with conventions.
- Optimize and illustrate accessibility and inclusivity.



Learning- Focused Syllabus Rubric

(Palmer, Bach & Streifer, 2014)

| Criteria | What to look for |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Learning goals and objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clearly identifiable, whether explicit or implicit• Measurable with specific action verbs• Addressing all dimensions (Fink, 2003) |
| Assessment activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aligned with objectives• Evidence for formative assessment with feedback• Summative assessments are clearly defined and scaffolded• Evaluation criteria available |
| Schedule | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Logical sequence• Themes/topics/units are clear |
| Overall learning environments | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positive, respectful tone; personal pronouns• Content as vehicle for learning (not policies/punishment)• Promise: relevance of content; learning opportunities |

For example...

Sample Assignment Descriptions

Content-Centered

Journal Article Evaluation:
You will be required to read three separate articles that demonstrate different research designs discussed in class. You will then be asked to answer several questions that pertain to one of the three articles.

Learner-Centered

Journal Article Evaluation (tied to SLOs 1 and 2):
This assignment is designed to assess your skills as a critical reader and to apply the concepts taught in class to published research. Becoming a critical reader will help you in your future career by enabling you to be accurate in your assumptions and predictions.

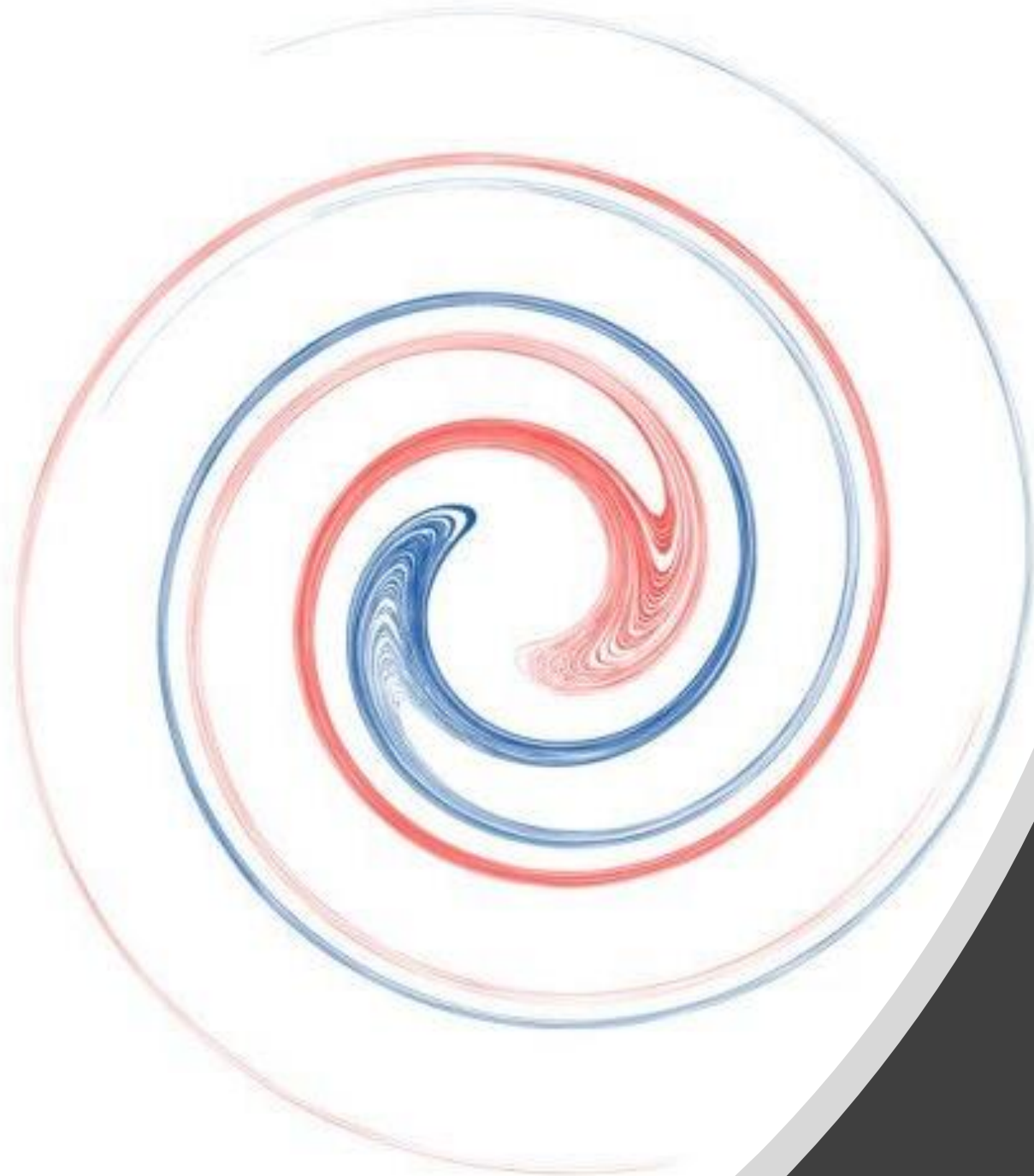
You will be required to read three separate articles that demonstrate different research designs discussed in class. You will then be asked to answer several questions that pertain to one of the three articles.

Another example...

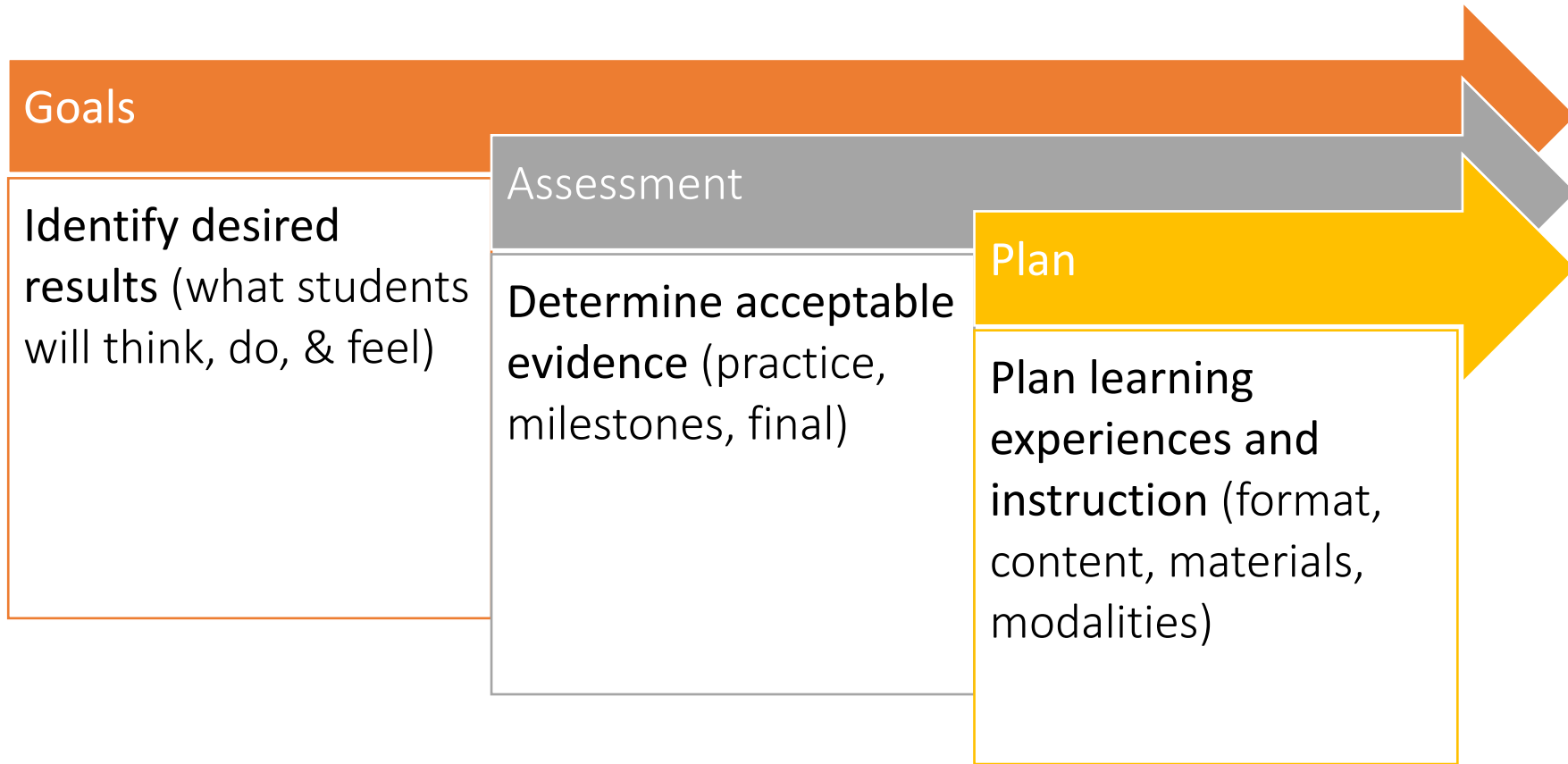
Place emphasis on course objectives and provide a rationale for how specific assignments support these objectives

| What I Want You to Know | What I Expect You to Do |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The field of psychology is very broad, encompassing many different subfields. As a science, it is highly applicable to the "real world." | You will differentiate between the major perspectives in psychology and apply a broad range of psychological concepts to "real world" settings. |
| We use critical thinking and the scientific method to conduct and critique research. Psychology is not just common sense! | You will demonstrate an understanding of the fundamentals of research and will evaluate claims using critical thinking and the scientific method. |

This shifts language from a list of requirements toward offering guidance and strategies for success.



Backward Design: A Method & Communication Strategy



Backward Design

(Wiggins & McTighe, 1998; 2005)

Designing Backward with an Alignment Grid

| Learning Outcomes / Objective(s) | Independent Action (Assessment) | Guided Practice (Formative Assessment) | Instruction |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Designate measurable outcome of students' knowledge, skills and attitudes. | Design assessment tools that show and encourage immediate application of learning to determine successful student learning outcome. | Create practice activities or events for students to use the content material so that they may participate and contribute to learning. | Describe the strategies, tools, materials, and sequence you will use to present material to explore and explain content that will open their minds, show benefits, and integrate new learning with prior knowledge. |

Syllabus Structure and Sequence

- Syllabus policies outline required and recommended content
- The structure and labels are your choice!

Let's take a look at the GE Intentional Syllabus...



General Education

Course Number & Title
General Education Course Category
Modality, Location, and Times
D2L Course Site URL
Instructor Name, Pronouns, Email

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| Table of Contents | |
| Introduction: (recommended) | 2 |
| Part 1: Course Curriculum | 3 |
| 1.1 Course Description | 3 |
| 1.2 Expected Learning Outcomes (required) | 3 |
| 1.3 Course Relevance (recommended) | 3 |
| 1.4 Course Curricular Category and Attribute Description (recommended) | 3 |
| 1.5 Course Assessment Plan (required) | 3 |
| Throughout the semester (required) | 3 |
| Signature Assignment and ePortfolio (recommended) | 3 |
| Required Extracurricular Activities (if given) | 3 |
| Final Examination or Project (if given) | 3 |
| Honors Credit (required) | 4 |
| 1.6 Scheduled Topics/Activities (required) | 4 |
| Part 2: Course Information | 4 |
| 2.1 Instructor(s) and Course Sites (required) | 4 |
| 2.2 Course Communications (required) | 4 |
| 2.3 Course Format and Session Structure (recommended) | 4 |
| 2.4 Required Resources and Equipment (required) | 4 |
| 2.5 Student Success Resources (recommended links) | 4 |



From Theory to Practice



What are three concrete ways that you can implement what you have heard today in your syllabus/class?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Next Up!

Composing with the Learner in Mind
(Tuesday August 9th @ 10 am)

Daily office hours 12-4pm
Link: [Office Hour Sign-Up](#)

