

Section 1: Evidence-Based Practices

The curriculum and corresponding instruction are most effective when they intentionally provides links between learning objectives, assignments, activities, and assessments – and encourage students to think critically about the application of content to both the broader discipline and the world.

The following is a list of evidence-based practices from the [Curriculum and Curricular Alignment](#) domain of the [Teaching Effectiveness Framework](#). Look for some of these practices while observing your colleagues.



INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM

- [Choose or create content](#) that deliberately reflects the diversity of contributors to the field
- Adopt [practices grounded in inclusive curriculum](#)
- Use a variety of course materials ([text](#), [video](#), [simulation](#), [games](#), etc.), assignments, and assessments to appeal to a variety of learning preferences
- Use visuals, examples, analogies, and humor that do not reinforce stereotypes but do [include traditionally marginalized people or perspectives to ensure inclusivity](#)
- Know the implications of religious perspectives regarding [course content](#)
- Ensure all of your [course materials](#) are [accessible](#) to all learners
- Ensure your class and materials are consistently and logically organized, especially in Canvas



LEARNING OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES

- Use [Bloom's](#) or [Fink's](#) Taxonomy to write [clear and measurable learning outcomes](#)
- Write [outcomes](#) that align with the cognitive demands of the course
- Write short-term [outcomes](#) for units, modules, or daily activities



COURSE ALIGNMENT OF ASSESSMENTS & ACTIVITIES

- Use [backwards design](#) to align all course content, assignments, and assessments -- make the connections explicit to students
- [Align assessments, assignments, and class activities with learning outcomes](#)
- [Align rigor](#) of class activities, discussions, i-clicker questions, etc. with rigor of exams
- Design activities where students [make connections between content and learning outcomes](#), the broader discipline, and the world



SYLLABUS

- Design a [learner-centered](#) syllabus ([use this rubric](#) to assess your syllabus); use positive, inclusive, supportive, student- friendly language
- Add an [inclusivity statement](#) to your syllabus
- Make sure your syllabus, textbooks, resources, and coursework are accessible to all learners according to the CSU [Accessibility by Design](#) website
- Provide an outline or visual map of the course, including [alignment of objectives to assessments](#)
- Refer to the TILT [Syllabus](#) page and [CSU Faculty Manual Section I: Academic and Legal Matters](#) for university syllabus requirements
- Include resource and technology requirements, course norms/netiquette, Canvas information and campus resources for students: [TILT Tutoring](#), [Student Resources and Campus Life](#)

PLEASE NOTE:

- The goal of Teaching Squares is for the observer to learn/gain as much, if not more, than the person being observed.
- Not all of these practices will be observable in one class session, 1-week or 1-module timeframe.



CANVAS OBSERVATIONS: You may have been added to the Canvas course as a *Designer*.

In this role you will not be able to view student grades, but this role does allow you to make changes to the course.

Please be careful as you navigate through the course, so you don't make accidental edits.

Be sure to maintain the confidentiality of the instructor and all students and their work. Limit your observation to the desired LMS module/week (typically 50-60 mins).

Section 2: Background Information

To be filled out by the instructor **being observed**

BASIC DATA

- Instructor Name:
- Course Number & Name:
- Course Location (or Canvas Shell URL):
- Observation Period (date or module):
- Number of Students Enrolled in Class:

PLANNING FOR THE OBSERVATION

1. Course Syllabus: Ensure that the observer has access to the syllabus for this course. Identify any areas for which you would like feedback.

2. List the learning outcomes and associated assessments that are **part of the observation time frame**.

Outcome/Objective:

Alignment with Activity and/or Assessment:

Outcome/Objective:

Alignment with Activity and/or Assessment:

Outcome/Objective:

Alignment with Activity and/or Assessment:

3. Describe specific goals or concerns that you would like the observer to pay attention to regarding curriculum/curricular alignment. See page 1 for ideas.
4. Is there anything else (not included above) you would like observed (student use of phones, student engagement overall, late arrivals, early departures, etc.)?
5. Is there anything else you would like the observer to know before observing your class?

Section 3: Observation Notes

FEEDBACK STARTER IDEAS

- I really liked how you...
- This works well because....
- Have you considered...
- I wonder if...

OBSERVATION FEEDBACK

To be filled out by the instructor **completing the observation**

Syllabus

1. To what extent does the syllabus feel inclusive, supportive, and student-centered. Do you have any editing suggestions?

2. To what extent are the outcomes/objectives clear, measurable, and written in student-friendly language? Do you have any editing suggestions?

3. What is most clear in the syllabus?

4. What is least clear in the syllabus? What would make it more clear?

Inclusive Curriculum

During the observation, pay attention to content, visuals, examples, etc. To what extent do they appear to be inclusive of diverse contributions to the field and diverse students who may be studying the content? Do you have any suggestions to make content, visuals, or examples more inclusive?

Beginning of Class/Module

1. Describe how the instructor begins the class or module.

2. How clear is the link between current content and outcomes/objectives?

Observer Reflection

*Things to
remember for my
own teaching...*

Section 3: Observation Notes (continued)

FEEDBACK STARTER IDEAS

- I really liked how you...
- This works well because....
- Have you considered...
- I wonder if...

OBSERVATION FEEDBACK

Teaching the Class/Module

1. Describe 1 or 2 instances where course outcomes/objectives are addressed **by the instructor**.

Describe how the objectives for this session or module show evidence of critical thinking?

2. Describe 1 or 2 instances where course objectives are incorporated into an activity and **students** are actively discussing or addressing an objective.

Describe how the activities demonstrate evidence of critical thinking.

3. Are there instances where you notice a connection can be made between course objectives, content, assignments, or assessment being made?

Wrapping up the Class/Module

1. Describe how the instructor ends the session/module.
How does the instructor reinforce the objectives addressed?

2. Describe 1 or 2 techniques that might be integrated or refined to enhance curriculum/curricular alignment.

Observer Reflection

*Things to
remember for my
own teaching...*