

A basic model of Curriculum Development part 1 (outline)

Basic questions to ask yourself when shaping the curriculum:

- What are the **needs** of our target churches and communities?
- What are our educational **purposes**? (These become our objectives or learning outcomes.)
- What educational **experiences** are likely to attain these objectives? (The answers lead us to our teaching methods and content)
- How can these educational experiences be most effectively **organised**?
- How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?
- How do we propose to **use the Bible** in our program? How will we ensure Bible teaching is related to the needs of the church and community?
- What covert '**para-messages**' will we convey through the context, structures and methods of training we will using? Will these messages accord with the overt messages we wish to convey? (These 'para-messages' constitute the "Hidden Curriculum".)

A linear interactive model of curriculum design

We can think about curriculum design in a model that consists of three steps which interact with each other.

1. Undertake a situation analysis

Here are some of the more important aspects of our situation to consider:

- Describe your primary target population (i.e. the main people you expect to be your students. Consider whether they are pastors and leaders or lay people, their age spread, gender, educational attainment, religious background, secular work, and any other relevant factors).
- Describe your secondary target population (i.e. the congregations to whom pastors among your students will minister, and the people your students may evangelise.) Generally speaking, what are their occupations, religious beliefs, educational attainments, etc.? This helps us focus not just on our students, but on those to whom they will minister. This secondary target group should always be kept in mind along with the primary group.
- Consider what training, if any, is already taking place. If so, are you planning to build on the existing program and curriculum, add to it, revise it, or replace it? Or is the existing program quite separate from the one you hope to start?
- What facilities or resources in the present program might help you with the new or revised one?
- Describe the physical, administrative, and organizational context in which training is taking place or is to take place.

2. Undertake a survey of actual needs in the church and community

- Identify projected future leadership and training needs which your course might help to meet.
- Identify Felt Needs of Potential Students.
- Identify relevant community, church and other organisational needs which your course might address. This may include some community needs expressed by government officials and development workers, Christian or secular, particularly if your curriculum will include a holistic emphasis at some point.
- These needs are best established by a formal or informal survey of pastors, other leaders and lay people, all of whose perspectives may differ.
- A program should not be based purely on the course developers' assumptions that they already know the situation and needs.

3. Formulate some general learning outcomes (objectives) for your program.

Good, useful Outcomes for a complete program will be:

- based on the **needs** you have identified in the situation you have analysed. Not just wishful thinking or a list of fruits of the Spirit.
- **student-centered**. Think in terms of Graduate Outcomes. It is best to state these Outcomes in terms of what the students will achieve, rather than what the lecturers will cover. A good way to maintain this focus is to start each Outcome with “Graduates of this program will”
- a mix of **Cognitive, Skill, and Affective Objectives**. That is, they will include not only knowledge of content, but also skills, values and attitudes, and spiritual growth.
- clearly stated. These are general outcomes, so there should not be too many, and they should be **short, uncomplicated** and in written form.
- **measurable**, so far as possible. How will we know that our program is achieving the results we need?