

# INTERDISCIPLINARY MASTER PROGRAM ON COMPUTATIONAL LINGUISTICS AT CENTRAL ASIAN UNIVERSITIES



## Module 3. Planning your course step by step

Ana M. Peña Cabanas



UNIVERSIDADE DA CORUÑA

# Introduction

**Careful planning** is one of the **most important component** of teaching online. A well planned and carefully balanced online curriculum is much easier to manage, and greatly reduces the potential for frustration and confusion during a student's online learning process.

How students learn in an online context is different to that of the face-to-face environment and **planning is required to ensure a student's online learning experience is effective, engaging and aligned with the learning outcomes for the class.**

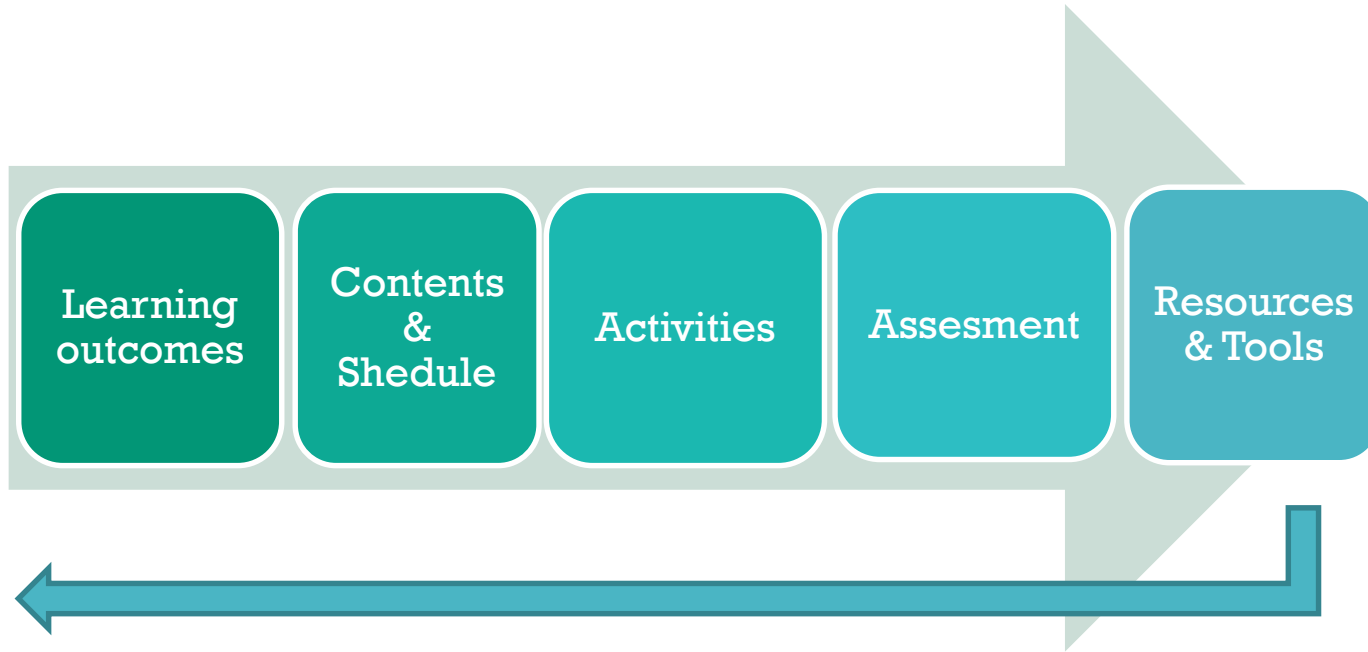
# Constructive Alignment

Constructive alignment is a term developed by Professor John B. Biggs . It means that all aspects of your class - from learning outcomes, lectures, resources, activities and assessment- are all directly related to each other, and support a progressive (or scaffolded) system of learning throughout your course.

Assessment is typically a series of progressive activities that allow students to gradually build, apply and evaluate knowledge, with each task directly relating to particular learning outcomes.

“In constructive alignment, we start with the outcomes we intend students to learn, and align teaching and assessment to those outcomes. The outcome statements contain a learning activity, a verb, that students need to perform to best achieve the outcome, such as “*apply* expectancy-value theory of motivation”, or “*explain* the concept of ... “. That verb says what the relevant learning activities are that the students need to undertake in order to attain the intended learning outcome. Learning is constructed by what activities the students carry out; learning is about what they do, not about what we teachers do. Likewise, assessment is about how well they achieve the intended outcomes, not about how well they report back to us what we have told them or what they have read.”

Professor John Biggs. Source [here](#)



# Professor Biggs suggests the following steps:

1. Describe the *intended learning outcomes* for the unit, using one *verb* (or at most two) for each outcome. They denote how the content or topics are to be dealt with and in what context.
2. Create a learning environment using *teaching/learning activities* that require students to engage each verb. In this way the activity nominated in the *intended learning outcome* is activated.
3. Use *assessment tasks* that also contain that verb, thus enabling one with help of predetermined using rubrics to judge how well students' performances meet the criteria.
4. Transform these judgments into final grades

[Source here](#)



Now we have clarified the operational framework for teaching design.  
Let's start each step of the way in more detail



# Step 1. Describe learning outcomes

Consider the scope of your class (general goal/objective) and determine what you want your students to learn (Intended Learning Outcomes).

Get help following SMART criteria:

- **Specific:** Make sure you can answer the questions: Who are my learners? What will be accomplished?
- **Measurable:** Can we measure/observe the progress of the Learning outcome? If not, then it doesn't make a good one.
- **Achievable:** Make sure that your LO can be achieved. This means setting realistic goals for realistic timeframes and available resources.
- **Relevant:** A good learning outcome must make sense for your students.
- **Time-sensitive:** Can learners accomplish this by the end of the course?

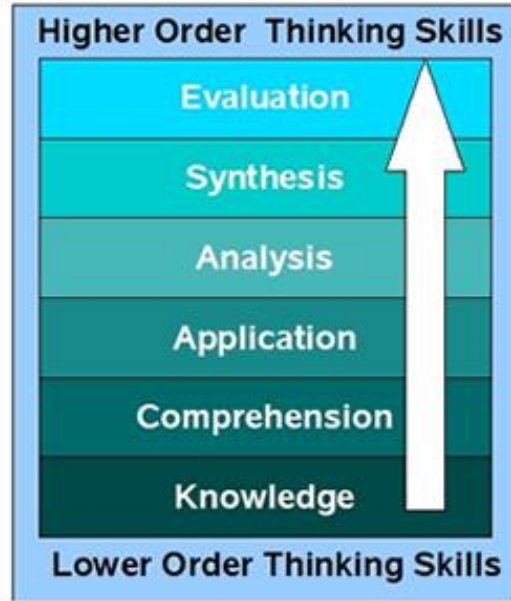


## To help you with this 1° step: **Bloom's Taxonomy**

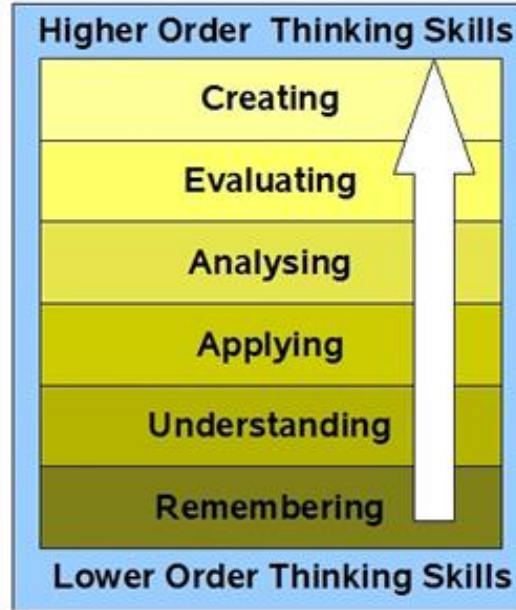
This taxonomy was originally created by Benjamin Bloom in 1956<sup>1</sup> to categorize a continuum of educational objectives. These objectives are described in terms of student-centered actions that represent the kind of knowledge and intellectual engagement we want our students to demonstrate.

Bloom's Taxonomy has recently been revised to Bloom's Digital Taxonomy. The updated version by Anderson and Krathwohl (2001)<sup>2</sup> is more reflective of digital technologies and digital cognitive objectives. For further information visit [this site](#)

## Bloom's Taxonomy



## Bloom's Revised Taxonomy



### References

1. Bloom, B.S. (Ed.). Engelhart, M.D., Furst, E.J., Hill, W.H., Krathwohl, D.R. (1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I: The Cognitive Domain*. New York: David McKay Co Inc.
2. Anderson, L.W., Krathwohl, D.R., Airasian, P.W., Cruikshank, K.A., Mayer, R.E., Pintrich, P.R., Raths, J., Wittrock, M.C. (2001). *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*. New York: Pearson, Allyn & Bacon.

# Step 2. Plan your course content and schedule

- However we choose to organize the course (chronologically, case studies,...), the goal should be to create a structure that supports the learning objectives we have identified.
- In general, courses should build towards greater complexity, starting with component pieces and working towards synthesis and integration.
- We must select the amount of information and resources having in mind the amount of time necessary to accomplish them.

For further information visit [this site](#)

## Step 3. Design appropriate activities

Consider the range of learning activities and teaching approaches that engage students in reading, thinking and discussing the content, and which support students in successfully completing tasks and ultimately achieving learning outcomes. Again the key is to align this step with the other two components.

This may include:

Readings, lectures, interactive activities, case studies, group or independent student projects, discussion topics, etc.

For further information visit [this site](#)

## Here you can see an example of how align e-activities with Learning Outcomes:

Type of Learning Outcomes	Examples of types of activities
<b>Remembering</b> - Identifying, recognising, listing, naming, retrieving, etc	- Online self-tests - Flash cards - Social bookmarking - Searching for facts
<b>Understanding</b> - Summarising, explaining, categorizing, annotating, classifying, etc	- Discussion forums - Commenting - Blogging - Tweeting - Tagging
<b>Applying</b> - Implementing, operating, using, editing, etc	- Simulations - Podcasts - Editing wikis - Virtual labs
<b>Analysing</b> - Organising, outlining, integrating, comparing, validating, etc	- Annotating videos - meta-tagging - Polling - Group negotiation - Reflection
<b>Evaluating</b> - Testing, experimenting, checking, judging, moderating, critiquing, etc	- Peer review - Moderating discussions - Critiquing blogs/wikis - Online debates - Virtual labs
<b>Creating</b> - Designing, publishing, planning, producing, inventing, constructing, etc.	- Presentations - Podcasts, webcasts - Video recording - Mixing/remixing - Digital story-telling

Source: [Learning to teach on line](#) UNSW Australia. MOOC in Coursera.

## Step 4. Create assessment system

- It is important to establish how and in which moments of the learning process you will use assignment. Remember this basic types:
  - **Diagnostic assessment:** It assesses what the learner already knows and/or the nature of difficulties that the learner might have
  - **Formative assessment:** it contributes to learning through providing feedback. Effective formative feedback will affect what the student and the teacher does next.
  - **Summative assessment:** It is normally, though not always, used at the end of a unit of teaching. Summative assessment is used to quantify and to reward achievement.
- Remember that assignment must be aligned with your intended learning outcomes. Here you have a table that makes assessment with Bloom's Taxonomy verbs.

## Checklist for Designing Assignments:

### **Have I...**

- Provided a written description of the assignment (in the syllabus or in a separate document)?*
- Specified the purpose of the assignment?*
- Indicated the intended audience?*
- Articulated the instructions in precise and unambiguous language?*
- Provided information about the appropriate format and presentation (e.g., page length, typed, cover sheet, bibliography)?*
- Indicated special instructions, such as a particular citation style or headings?*
- Specified the due date and the consequences for missing it?*
- Articulated performance criteria clearly?*
- Indicated the assignment's point value or percentage of the course grade?*
- Provided students (where appropriate) with models or samples?*



## Step 5. Select resources & tools

Before starting to choose resources and technology, please don't forget **the importance of considering pedagogy before technology**

It is important to examine the reasons for introducing a new tool into your teaching. Students value technology when it adds to their learning, not when it is used with no apparent relationship or benefit to how they learn.

It is important therefore to consider the following issues:

- **Establish the key pedagogical principles and then decide how technology can support activities** in order to achieve or support your intended learning outcomes
- **Technology is just a means to an end:** technology is just a facilitator of the learning process.
- **Start simple** and use resources and tools that you are comfortable with and that you have tested before.

For further information visit [this site](#)

# Finish!

It's time to practice by planning your own course. You can use help-documents you will find in the next section of this module.

When your planning is ready, you can start implementing it in your Moodle course test.

