



# Integrated Planning for Competency-Based Education

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# Intended Learning Outcomes

- A clear understanding of the differences between competency-based education and traditional academic programs
- An appreciation of the wide-ranging impact that competency-based education can have on operations throughout the institution
- An awareness of the types of factors that need to be taken into consideration in developing competency-based programs
- Examples of best practices in planning competency-based education programs



# Growing Enthusiasm for CBE

- “It is an understatement of near-epic proportions to say that policy makers and politicians are smitten with Western Governors University’s brand of competency-based learning. . . . [The] nonprofit institution has been embraced (*if not hyped*) as one possible answer to the challenge of educating more students (especially adults) at a lower cost.”
  - *Inside Higher Ed, 4/30/12*



# Institutions Offering CBE

## University Examples:

- Western Governors University
- Southern New Hampshire University
  - College of America
- University of Wisconsin
- University of Michigan
- University of Texas
- Purdue University



# Nation-Wide Interest

## Community & Technical College Examples:

- Sinclair Community College (OH)
- Austin Community College (TX)
- Kentucky Community & Technical Colleges
- Valencia College (FL)
- Spokane Falls Community College (WA)
- Ivy Tech Community College (IN)
- Illinois Central College



# Many Other Examples

- Estimated that more than 200 colleges & universities have developed or are in the process of developing CBE programs.



# Why the Sudden Interest?

- CBE is not new
  - Alverno, Western Governors, etc.
- So, why the sudden interest?
  - Increased focus on college completion
  - Increased focus on meeting employer expectations
  - Money!
    - ✓ Grant Funding
    - ✓ Financial Aid



# Defining Competencies

- Council of Regional Accrediting Agencies (C-RAC) – June 2, 2015
- Can include statements about knowledge or understanding
- Primarily emphasize what students can do with their knowledge.
- Often tied to employer expectations.





# Defining CBE

- Council of Regional Accrediting Agencies (C-RAC) – June 2, 2015
- Outcomes-based approach to earning a credential
- Satisfactory academic progress is expressed as the attainment of mastery of identified competencies
  - Not fulfillment of seat-time requirements



# Two Principal Approaches

1. Course/credit-based approach
2. Direct assessment approach

Note: Hybrid approaches also possible



# Course/Credit-Based Approach

- Required demonstration of competencies is embedded into a traditional curriculum consisting of discrete courses
- Typically term-based
- May generate two types of transcripts:
  1. List of courses and credits earned
  2. List of competencies demonstrated



# Direct Assessment Approach

- Competencies *not* tied to discrete courses/credits
- Self-paced
- Not term-based
- Credential awarded upon demonstration of all required competencies
- No grades or G.P.A.
- Transcripts simply list competencies demonstrated



# Credit Hour Equivalencies

- Direct assessment programs establish “credit-hour equivalencies”
  - Draw on institution’s previously-defined policies for awarding credit hours
  - Must conform to general practice in higher ed
  - Focus on equivalent learning demonstrated, rather than equivalent seat time



# Time Constant, Not Learning

- Traditional learning model:
  - Time held constant (for all students)
  - Learning (one student to the next) is variable.



# Learning Consistent, Not Time

- Self-paced CBE programs
  - Time is variable
    - Some students proceed faster, some slower
  - Expectations for learning held constant
    - All students expected to demonstrate all competencies



# All You Can Learn Buffet

- How does your institution charge tuition?
  - By the credit hour?
  - By the term (semester, quarter, etc.)?
- Many self-paced CBE programs charge by ***subscription periods***
  - “All you can learn” model
  - Similar to Netflix subscription



# CBE vs. Traditional

- Even course/credit-based CBE programs differ significantly from traditional
- C-RAC: An accreditor will consider a program to be competency-based when:
  - All of the courses have learning goals expressed as competencies
  - **Students are required to demonstrate mastery of *every competency*** in each course to earn credit for such courses



# CBE vs. Traditional

Traditional 1										
<b>Asmt.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Score</b>	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70
Traditional 2										
<b>Asmt.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Score</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100	100			
CBE										
<b>Asmt.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Score</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100	100			





## CBE vs. CPL

- Both competency based education and credit for prior learning (CPL) require students to demonstrate competencies in order to earn college credits.
- However, CBE programs often do *not* grant credit for prior learning.
- Instead, prior learning can help accelerate progress through CBE program.



# CBE vs. Correspondence

- CBE is *not* a high-tech form of correspondence education.
- Unlike correspondence education, CBE must be designed to ensure “regular and substantive interaction” between students and qualified faculty.
  - USDE: Students must not be left “to educate themselves.”



# Regular and Substantive Interaction

- Institutions offering CBE programs can and should provide students with support services such as “success coaches” and online tutoring.
  - *This is not sufficient, however.*
- Faculty interaction with students must be designed into the program.
- Students must also be able to access qualified faculty when they need to.



# Regular Interaction

- While students may elect not to initiate contact with faculty, program design must include periodic faculty-initiated contacts.
- These contacts may be “event driven”
  - Completion of certain key competencies
  - Completion of some percentage of competencies
  - Submission of assessments
  - Etc.



# Substantive Interaction

Could include, but not limited to:

- Direct instruction
- Substantive feedback on assessments
- Email or phone discussions of relevant academic subject matter





# Participant Interaction

1. What are the pros and cons of the two primary approaches?
  - a) Course/credit based
  - b) Self-paced direct assessment
2. What concerns would you have about adopting a self-paced direct-assessment program at your institution?
3. Who on your campus would have to be involved if you were planning to develop a self-paced direct assessment program?



# Integrated Planning for CBE

- Who needs to be involved?
  - Faculty (program faculty + bargaining unit)
  - Program advisory committees
  - Academic administrators
  - Financial Aid
  - Student Services (Enrollment services, advising, etc.)
  - IT staff
  - Business office
  - Marketing
  - Others?



# Faculty Considerations

- Define expected competencies
- Define levels of mastery
- Agree on assessments used to evaluate mastery
- Define faculty roles
  - Workload & contract considerations
- Develop curriculum
  - “Curate content”?
- Establish expectations for student interactions
- What else?



# Program Advisory Committees

- Participate in discussions about expected competencies
- What else?



# Financial Aid

- FA is typically tied to seat time, clock hours, and terms (semesters, quarters, etc.)
- Direct assessment programs require special USDE as well as accreditor approval
- Experimental Sites Initiative
- What else?



# Student Services

- Advising
- Admissions
- Registrar
- Billing
- “Success Coaches”
  - Proactively engage students to help keep them on track
- What else?



# Information Technology (IT)

- Learning Management System
  - Blackboard, D2L, Moodle, etc.
- Student Information System
  - PeopleSoft, Banner, etc.
    - Typically designed to support term-based programs
- What else?



# Business Office

- Tuition considerations
  - All you can learn model?
- Student billing considerations
- What else?





# Marketing

- Typical target market for self-paced programs:
  - Nontraditional (adult) students with some college, no degree
- Marketing strategy
- What else?



# Important Considerations

- Screening for student readiness/fit
- Student Success Coaches
- Defining “Satisfactory Academic Progress” (SAP)
- Defining “repeat policy”
- Process for counseling students into alternative delivery modes if not successful in self-paced model



# Important Considerations

- **Appropriate Approvals:**
  - Internal (Program Advisory Committee, Curriculum Committee, Board of Trustees, etc.)
  - Regional Accrediting Agency
    - Substantive Change Application
  - USDE
  - State?
  - Others?



# C-RAC's Evaluation Considerations

1. Capacity to offer program and demonstrated expertise in assessment
2. Whether or not the “competencies” emphasize performance (not just knowledge)
3. Whether proposed competencies are externally referenced
4. Whether or not the institution ensures “regular and substantive interaction”



# Evaluation Considerations

5. Whether or not the competencies align with expectations for graduates in the field
6. Whether or not the competencies are appropriate to the degree level
7. Whether the institution's expectations for "mastery-level" performance are appropriate
8. Whether a student must demonstrate each competency to earn a credential



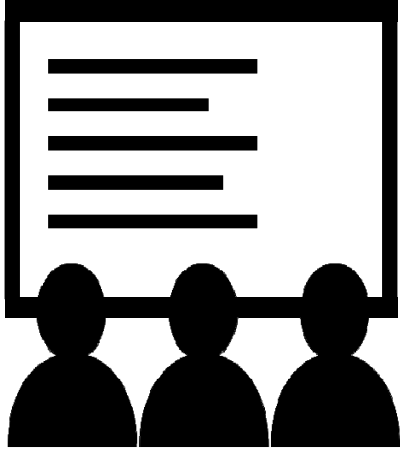
# Evaluation Considerations

9. Whether or not the institution follows good practice in assessment
10. Whether a high proportion of the competencies represent authentic demonstrations
11. Whether the institution validates the quality of the program through appropriate measures



# Faculty Perspective

- Developing a competency-based Web Developer Program

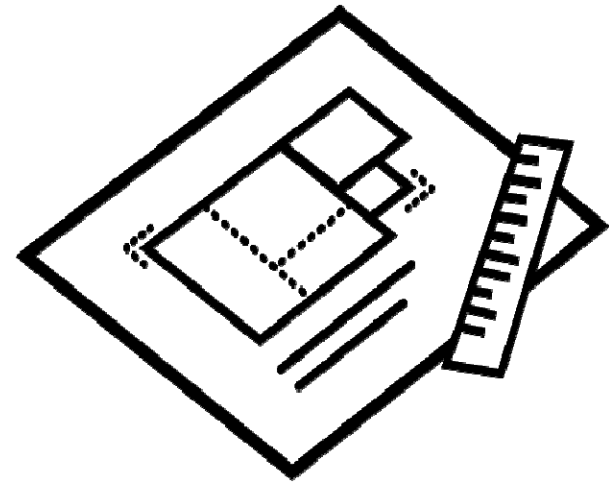


Created by Boudewijn Mijnlief  
from the Noun Project

Lessons learned

Anecdotes

Plans

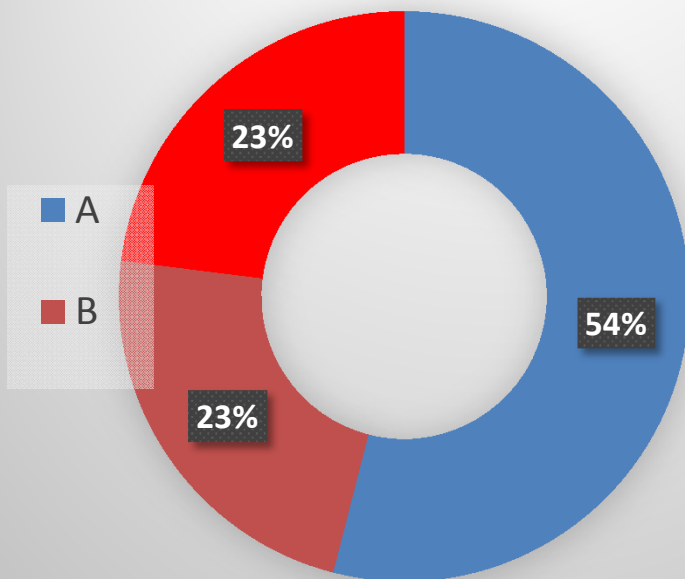


Created by Kelcey Hurst  
from the Noun Project



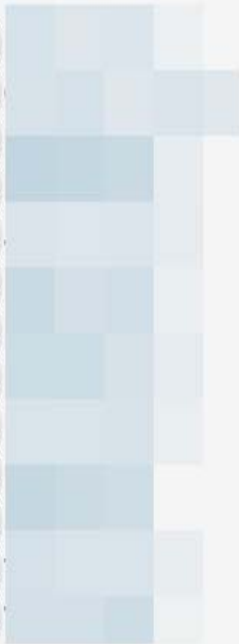
# CMWEB 155 – UX design

Student Competency = 77%



Created by Max Miner  
from the Noun Project

## COURSE CHECKLIST TO DATE



## FN MARKING MANAGER



- 1 Requires Grading
- 209 Graded
- 81 Not Submitted
- 0 Draft

- Gradebook
- Reports

0 Students have not logged in for at least 7 days

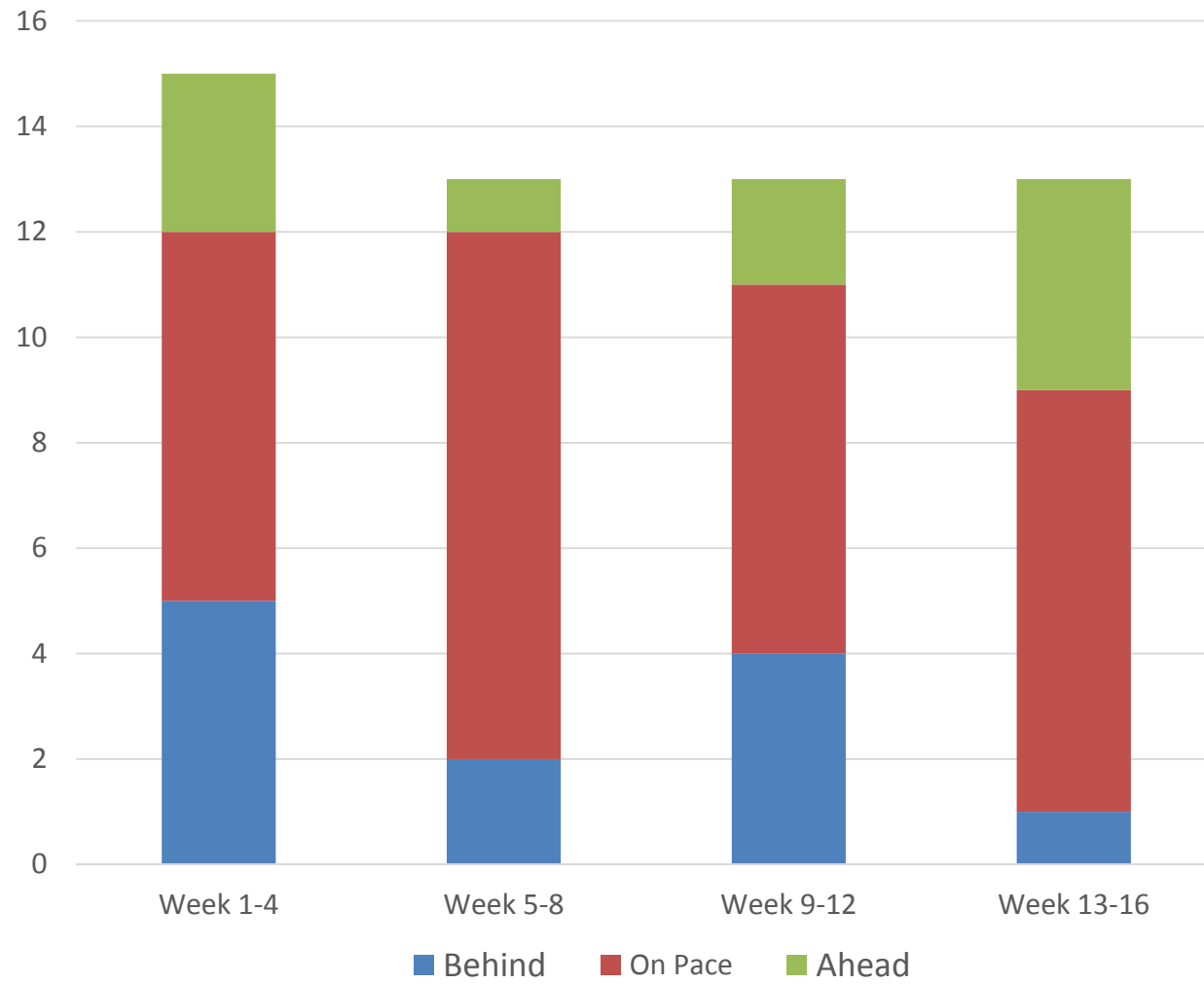
8 Students have not submitted any activities for 7 days

0 Students have an overall grade less than 50%

Course (1) CMWEB 155

- (1) 7. Begin work on CMWEB 15...
- (1)

## Student Progress





CMWEB 250

1 create well-formed XML d

Learning Outcomes

1.1 Students use XML Notep  
Single root element, elev.

Topic

Topic 2

Assessment

Lab 1, Quiz 1

2 understand how to create

Learning Outcomes

2.1 Students create DTD bas  
Create internal DTD and  
Create external DTD and

2.2 Students create XSD sche  
Schema is associated wit

2.2 Students create Relax NG  
Schema can be used to ve

Topic

Topic 3

Assessment

Lab 2, Quiz 2

Topic 4

Lab 3, Quiz 3

Topic 5

Lab 4, Quiz 4

3 understand the base tech

Learning Outcomes

3.1 Students use Visual Stud.

Topic

Topics 11 & 12

Assessment

Lab 9, Quiz 9

4 develop small applications

Learning Outcomes

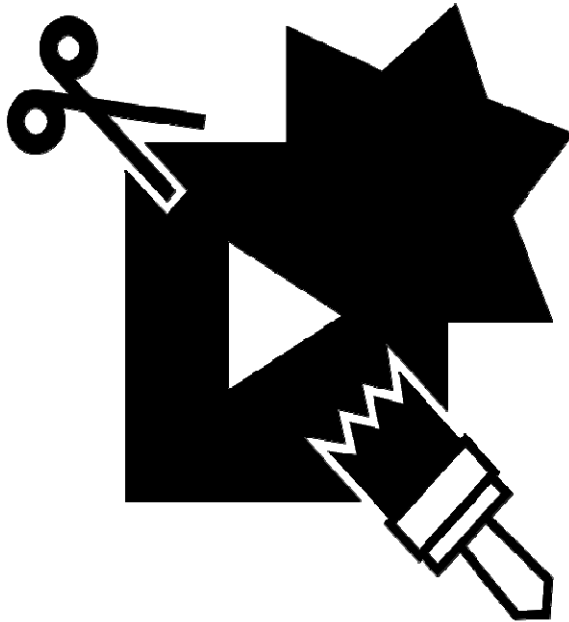
4.1 Students use SOAPUI to c

Topic

Topic 12

Assessment

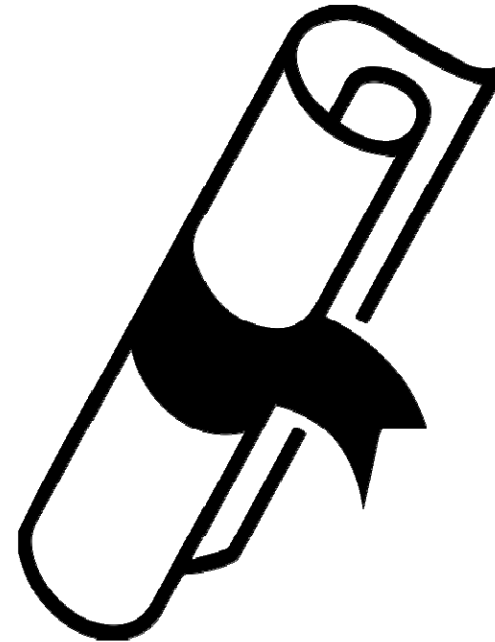
Lab 9, Quiz 9



Created by Plotrek Chuchla  
from the Noun Project

Modify courses

Help students  
understand new format



Created by Marco Galtarossa  
from the Noun Project

Modify transcripts



# Thank You!

- Questions?
- Comments?



# Some Important Resources

- **Regional Accrediting Agencies**
- **Council of Regional Accrediting Commission (C-RAC)**
  - [https://www.insidehighered.com/sites/default/server\\_files/files/C-RAC%20CBE%20Statement%20Press%20Release%206\\_2.pdf](https://www.insidehighered.com/sites/default/server_files/files/C-RAC%20CBE%20Statement%20Press%20Release%206_2.pdf)
- **US Department of Education**
  - <http://www.ed.gov/oii-news/competency-based-learning-or-personalized-learning>





# Experimental Sites Initiative (ESI)

- USDE is using ESI to provide waivers and modifications to statutory and/or regulatory requirements to allow a limited number of institutions to participate in experiments that will test alternative methods for administering Title IV aid programs for students enrolled in CBE programs.
  - <https://experimentalsites.ed.gov/exp/index.html>



# Other Valuable Resources

- **CAEL**

- <http://www.cael.org/what-we-do/competency-based-education>

- **Lumina Foundation**

- <http://www.luminafoundation.org/files/resources/competency-based-education-landscape.pdf>



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