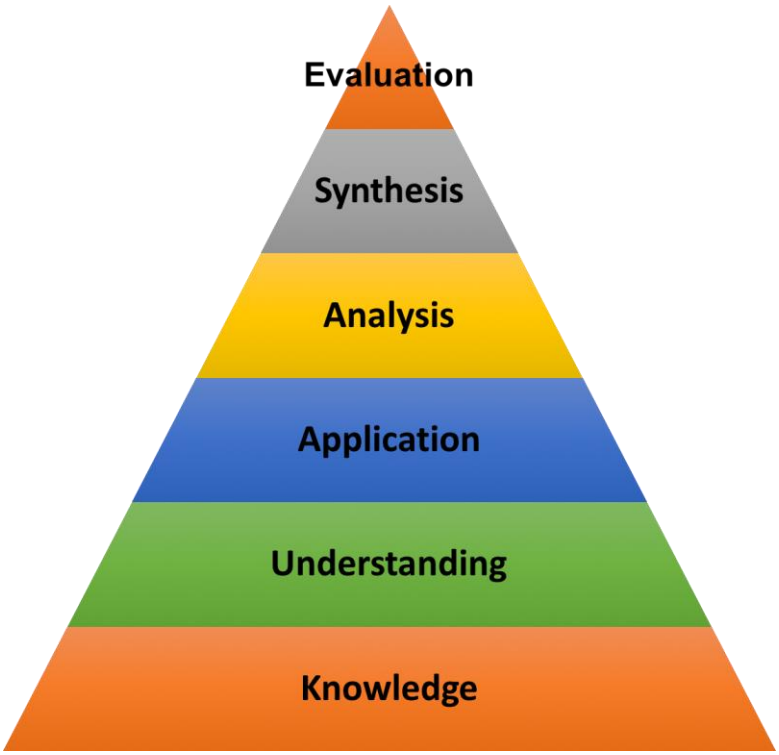
English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI)
Module 2: Task 1 – 4 Video Lectures
Video 2.4: *Creating a Syllabus for an EMI Course*

Welcome to our video on Creating a Syllabus. I'm Dawn Bikowski at Ohio University.

This video will discuss the parts of your course syllabus and we'll look at examples together.

First of all, what is a syllabus? Well, it is a type of road map for how your course will run. It should include a few basic parts, and then you can add more over time as you see fit. First, you will want to be sure you include the basics of your course, such as the times the course meets, the room, your name and contact information, your office hour times when students can come ask you questions, the course description, and any required textbooks/materials or technologies. For the description, you will focus on the topics that your course needs to cover.

The next thing is the student learning objectives. Here, you want to be sure the objectives are observable and measurable. That means that you as the instructor can see that students have progressed in the content area you are assessing. Student learning objectives should start with "Students will be able to" and use verbs that correspond to the type of learning you want your students to have. Many educators use Bloom's Taxonomy to write their student learning objectives [on screen: (Davis, 2014; Shabatura, 2018)]. This taxonomy offers six levels of learning objectives, moving from lower to higher order thinking skills [on screen: Bloom et al., 1956)]. It is suggested that courses have at least some learning objectives from the higher level categories. Some of the levels have been modified slightly over time, but the original six levels are discussed here. [on screen: image of Bloom's Taxonomy]



For each level, a set of verbs to use in the objectives is suggested. Keep in mind that some verbs can be used in more than one category.

- The most basic level is **Knowledge**. This means you want students to be able to simply display that they know something, perhaps recalling facts or showing that they memorized information. In this case, you can use words such as "Students will be able to define, describe, identify, list, match, memorize, recall, or state certain information." An example is, "Students will be able to list Newton's three laws of motion."
- Slightly higher than Knowledge is students being able to demonstrate **Comprehension**. This means that students will be able to interpret important information and discuss course content in their own words. Useful verbs are that "Students will be able to… classify, convert, describe, discuss, explain, or summarize a point." An example for this level is "Students will be able to describe Newton's three laws of motion to in their own words."
- And above Comprehension is **Application**. For Application, students should be able to take concepts they have covered in class and apply them to a new situation. Useful words are, "Students will be able to… apply, calculate, demonstrate, discover, modify, predict, or solve something." An example of Application is "Students will be able to calculate the kinetic energy of a projectile."
- Above Application is **Analysis**. In this level, students should be able to take new information and break it down into smaller parts in order to establish the relationship between them. Verbs

include “categorize, compare, differentiate, or question,” and an example is “Students will be able to differentiate between potential and kinetic energy.”

- The fifth level is students being able to **Synthesize**. For this category, students should be able to use different pieces of information and form a pattern or whole. Verbs in this category are “arrange, assemble, categorize, combine, design, formulate, or generate.” An example is “Students will be able to design their own goals for fiscal and monetary policies.”
- Finally, the last and highest category of higher order thinking skills is **Evaluation**. This involves students being able to look at someone else’s ideas and evaluate their conclusions. Verbs in this area include “argue, assess, choose, conclude, judge, justify, and predict.” An example student learning objective is, “Students will be able to assess whether using conservation of energy or conservation of momentum would be more appropriate for solving a dynamics problem.”

Those are the six levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy and some useful verbs you can use for your student learning objectives, and you can see how the top categories of Evaluation or Synthesis require more critical thinking from students. There are words to avoid as well—these include “understand, know, learn, appreciate, or think about.” These words should be avoided in student learning objectives because they cannot be observed and measured. How will you know that a student appreciates something or learns something? Instead, re-write the objectives to be observable, for example that students can identify or label something. After you write these student learning objectives, you can create specific assignments and rubrics to assess how well students meet these objectives.

Let’s look at an example together. In an Introduction to Biology course, the instructor includes these student learning objectives: “Students will be able to explain the importance of each step in the scientific method and why society should rely on the process of science; relate biology to modern scientific issues; identify reliable sources of scientific information and explain why it is reliable; and interpret scientific figures and tables.” Stop the video and look back at these learning objectives. Are they observable and measurable? Would you as the instructor be able to say Yes or No that students could do these things? Yes, I think these student learning objectives are observable and measurable. I can imagine assessments that would allow the instructor to evaluate to what degree students succeeded in these areas, such as through exams or even student presentations.

Let’s look at another course. In this one, an objective is that “students will be able to understand the concepts of stress and strain.” What do you think? Is this an objective that is observable and measurable? No, I don’t think it is. The word “Understand” cannot be observed. Instructors who use these words therefore need to find other verbs that can express their goals for students and at the same time be more precise. For example, “Students will be able to understand the concepts of stress and strain” is abstract. Instead, maybe the professor could say “Students will be able to compare stress and strain fractures in the leg.”

In addition to course information and student learning objectives, your syllabus should include the assignments that will be graded and what their weighting should be. You can make a list of your graded and assignments and then how much they will be worth. For example, you might include a group presentation that is worth 50% of the grade, or you might make it worth 50 points. Be sure that each

graded assignment that you'll include is also included in your syllabus under assignments section. You should also include any course policies—for example about attendance or plagiarism—and the course schedule. If your entire course won't be in English, you will want to list which modules will be in English for the students. Finally, you'll want to include your course schedule with the assignment due dates and any readings or video homework.

Ok, we have looked at the parts of your course syllabus and some examples. While every institution has different requirements for a syllabus, these parts are useful for any course planning. They include the basics of your course with the course description, your student learning objectives (which should be observable and measurable and have active verbs), your course assignments along with their weighting, your course policies, and your schedule. Thanks for watching!

References[1]

Bloom, B. S., Englehart, M. D., Furst, E. J., Hill, W. H., & Krathwohl, D. R. (1956). Taxonomy of educational objectives: Handbook I. *Cognitive domain.* New York, NY: David McKay.

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