Jefferson Educator: Domain of Learning Design

The Jefferson Educator designs learning experiences aligned with learning goals to enhance learners' knowledge, skills, and attitudes. These experiences integrate practice and feedback for learners' continued growth.

Learning Design is a deliberate, iterative, learner-centered process. It is informed by design thinking and the science of instruction. Learning Design adopts sound pedagogical practices selected according to the needs of the learner and the goals of the curriculum. It is often characterized by 'backward' design—a process that begins by determining the desired learning outcomes, specifying how learners will demonstrate those outcomes, and then designing educational activities to promote that achievement. Learning Design promotes inclusivity and evidence-based design practice.

When might I use Innovation?

Learning design can be implemented in various educational contexts. By thoughtfully planning and structuring educational experiences, instructors can better meet the diverse needs of their students and promote deeper learning. Here are some examples of when and how you might apply learning design principles.

- **Backward Design** is a method of designing a curriculum, course, or individual lessons by setting learning goals before choosing instructional methods and forms of assessment. It ensures that all three levels (learning outcomes, assessment, and learning activity/instruction) are aligned.
- **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** is a comprehensive framework that enhances all learners' learning by tailoring educational experiences to meet individual needs.
- **Learning Analytics** is the measurement, collection, analysis, and reporting of data about learners and their contexts, for purposes of understanding and optimizing learning and the environments in which it occurs.

Key Principles of Innovation

These core characteristics of Learning Design will be addressed throughout this module, and they are reflected in the following list of key principles:

- Balances outcomes-orientation and learner-centeredness. Addresses clear learning outcomes while meeting students' diverse needs and interests, ensuring that education is tailored to individual preferences and fosters a community of inquiry.
- Supports participant learning in intentionally crafted learning environments. Adapts learning environments to serve learning goals, strategically employing technology for better content access, fuller engagement, and more personalized learning paths. Occurs in both formal and informal settings, on campus and off campus.
- Accounts empathetically for a diversity of learner personas. Broadens inclusivity by accommodating diverse student needs and learning paths. Offers various content formats and assessment methods.
- Promotes active learning. Engages students through collaborative and reflective activities, enhancing the application of knowledge and self-awareness. Harnesses learner input through brainstorming, prototyping, design critique, and user testing.
- Demonstrates continuous improvement and experimentation. Cultivates a growth mindset and values feedback, fostering innovation and adaptability in learning.

Encourages ongoing refinement of teaching methods and learning activities, making education responsive to learners' evolving needs.

- Draws upon the scholarship of teaching and learning. Bases educational practices on evidence-based strategies and current research.
- Explores Learning Analytics. Gathers and studies data about students' learning patterns to make educational experiences more effective, personalized, and engaging.

How can I get started?

- **Prioritize Learner-Centric Design**: Initiate your design process by exploring the unique backgrounds, needs, and learning preferences of your students. This will help tailor the learning experience effectively.
- **Focus on Engagement**: Reflect on the specific strategies and activities that have sparked interest and participation in the past. Prioritize incorporating these elements early in your design to foster a lively and engaging learning environment.
- **Embrace Diversity in Learning Modalities**: Assess the various methods you currently use to present information and enable expression. Aim to broaden these approaches to cater to the diverse needs of your learners.
- **Leverage Technology Strategically**: Consider the range of available technologies and identify those that align closely with your goals. Focus on implementing these tools to enrich the learning experience meaningfully.
- **Incorporate Feedback Loops**: Prioritize creating channels for timely feedback from learners, allowing for continuous course adjustment and improvement based on direct learner input.

Selected Resources

Ahmad, A., Schneider, J., Griffiths, D., Biedermann, D., Schiffner, D., Greller, W., & Drachsler, H. (2024). Connecting the dots – A literature review on learning analytics indicators from a learning design perspective. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 40(6), 2432–2470. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcal.

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Nelson, L. L. (2021). *Design and Deliver: Planning and Teaching Using Universal Design for Learning* (Second Edition.). Brookes Publishing.

Phillips, T., Lachheb, A., Sankaranarayanan, R., & Abramenka-Lachheb, V. (2021). Learning Analytics as a Tool for Improvement and Reflection on Instructional Design Practices. In S. Conklin, B. Oyarzun, R. M. Reese, & J. E. Stefaniak (Eds.), *A Practitioner's Guide to Instructional Design in Higher Education*. EdTech Books.

Wiggins, G. P., & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by design* (Expanded 2nd ed.). Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

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