

Faculty Reflection Prompts: Using Backward Design to Plan Courses that Teach the Ten Essential Skills

Stage 1: Identify Desired Results

Focus: What do you want students to *know, understand, and be able to do*?

1. Which of the **10 essential skills** are most relevant to this course or unit?
2. Why are you focusing on this essential skill?
3. What would it look like if a student **mastered that essential skill** by the end of the course?
4. How does this essential skill connect to **your course outcomes or program goals**?
5. Are your course learning outcomes clearly aligned to **essential skill development**, or do they need to be revised? Why?

Stage 2: Determine Acceptable Evidence

Focus: How will you know if students have achieved the desired results to learn and practice that essential skill?

5. What types of learning assessments would provide the **strongest evidence** that students have developed this essential skill?
6. Are your learning assessments measuring **application and transfer** of the essential skill that builds on or complements content knowledge related to the subject of the course? (e.g., Skill #7 **Apply quantitative reasoning skills to analyze and solve numerical problems** [in an Aviation course]).
7. How can you include **formative assessments** that help students practice and reflect on the essential skill during the learning process?
8. Are your rubrics or grading criteria **clear about the essential skill** being assessed?

Stage 3: Plan Learning Experiences & Instruction

Focus: What teaching and learning activities will help students develop the essential skill?

9. What **activities, case studies, or projects** give students real opportunities to use this essential skill?
10. How can you **scaffold** the essential skill across the course so students build confidence and complexity over time and are able to transfer what they have learned to other contexts?
11. What opportunities do students have to **reflect on their own development** of this essential skill?
12. How do you **make the essential skill visible** to students in your teaching (e.g., naming it, modeling it, practicing it)?
13. How can instructional approaches support **transfer** of the essential skill learned?

Integration & Transparency

13. How do you **communicate the importance** of this essential skill to students (e.g., career relevance, lifelong learning, success in college and beyond)?
14. Where can you **embed transparency** (*Purpose, Task, Criteria*) in assignments designed to teach this essential skill?
 - a. What *Knowledge* will students gain from the experience of learning and practicing this essential skill?
15. How might you use **peer feedback or collaboration** to reinforce the essential skill in meaningful ways?
16. Are students given **authentic, relevant contexts** to apply the essential skill, not just broad or theoretical scenarios?
17. How will this learning experience prepare students for the workplace?