

**Detailed Course Planning Checklist**

1. **Start with the Big Picture** 
   1. Review course notes made during the prior term. (What went well, what could be improved, what did you learn from student feedback, etc.)
   2. The big picture consists of the overarching goals of the course. Introductory accounting may have a dozen or more learning objectives, but one or two overarching goals. For example,
      1. Develop students’ ability to think like business professionals by understanding the creation and implications of financial statements.
      2. Develop students’ ability to think like business managers with respect to understanding product and service production costs.
   3. These goals frame my thinking about instruction, learning activities, and formative and summative assessments. What key goals frame your thinking?
   4. Review/revise major content areas. This process flows from the big picture. Each chapter, unit, or content chunk is considered carefully to determine whether it’s “need to know” or “nice to know.” Not all content is equally important. Prioritizing means critical content gets more of my time and students’ attention.
   5. Consider flow. Does the material build? What’s most interesting? Most challenging? How are areas related?
   6. Consider how reordering/skipping content can enhance learning. When possible, schedule the most challenging material early in the course.
   7. Sequence the course goals by focusing on developing understanding and integrating big-picture concepts from beginning to end. Build in looped learning--revisiting earlier material throughout the course.
2. **Use Course Calendar as Planning Tool** 
   1. List each class session. Include holidays/breaks; important registrar deadlines (drop/add, late drop); planned teacher absences for conferences; significant campus events like homecoming, etc.
   2. Consider how breaks, planned absences, and holidays might affect class flow. Integrate strategies to address potential emotional/motivational low points.
   3. Be mindful of pacing. Consider allotted time to learn, based on content challenge and priority. It’s too simplistic to allow a week per chapter. Build in “cushions” to minimize a crush at the end. Assume there will be a few delays: Where can time be made up? What content can be compressed?
   4. Specify the purpose of each class meeting: content, student prep work, instructional materials and resources, in-class activities, and follow-up assignment(s). Examples:
      1. Textbook chapter or other readings
      2. Warm-up assignment
      3. Practice exercise, podcast assignment, screencast assignment
      4. Lecture notes
      5. Handouts for in-class active learning
      6. Homework
   5. Chunk the days into units based on content theme, not just chapters. Identify content that should be looped forward/backward to reinforce long-term retention.
   6. Tentatively set major assessment dates
   7. View the course as a whole. Consider the timing of major assessments. When are other courses’ assessments? Be very intentional about what is planned prior to and after Fall/Spring break. How are learning and motivation impacted? How can the low-points of a semester be mitigated?
3. **Consider Methods of Assessment and Grading (revise syllabus)**
   1. Categories of assessment: review instructions, purpose, and quantity
      1. Warm Ups
      2. Assignments
      3. Exams
      4. Papers
      5. Projects
      6. Other?
   2. Assess course grade percentage relative to quantity, effort, timing and effectiveness to measure learning
4. Revise other areas of syllabus: office hours, technology policy, and other areas as needed
5. Use the course calendar for course creation in LMS.

This checklist serves as a supplement to “Creating a Course Calendar that Aligns to the Rhythms of the Semester” written by Lolita Paff, PhD.