

Augustana College

PLT Praxis Review

National and State Learning Standards K-12

State and Local Curriculum Frameworks K-12

State and local curriculum guides K-12

Scope and sequence in specific disciplines K-12

Behavioral objectives: affective, cognitive, psychomotor, speech/language K-12

Learner objectives and outcomes K-12

Emergent curriculum K-12

Themes/projects K-12

Concepts addressed:

Techniques for Planning Instruction

Learning standards are general descriptions of what every student should know and be able to do in each subject area. They are defined at the state and local levels.

The movement to establish academic standards came from public dissatisfaction with student performance, particularly with poor performance on international assessments. Many believe the national report, *A Nation at Risk* (1983), set the standards movement in motion. *A Nation at Risk* reported that the schools in the United States were seriously inadequate and in need of immediate reform. In 1996 President Clinton met with 40 state governors and chief executive officers (CEO's) from major corporations throughout the U.S. - the group agreed standards needed to be established along with a system of accountability to ensure a standardized, quality education for students. The result was the development of national standards in all academic areas (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics NCTM is the only content area that had already constructed learning standards).

Experts in each content area (science, language arts, social studies, physical education, etc) collaborated to identify the most important information for students to understand and be able to do. Once the standards were established benchmarks (detailed learning objectives) were identified. The learning standards were usually broken down into the following levels: primary, upper elementary, middle school and high school.

Goals 2000 provided direction and financial backing for states to become involved in creating standards for their state. State standards had a grassroots feel because businessmen, educators, parents, and other community members were involved in their development. State standards and national standards typically align with each other.

The three purposes for content standards are to:

1. Clarify what we want students to know and be able to do
2. Raise our expectations of student achievement
3. Determine a common set of curriculum goals, enhancing communication between all parties involved

The following is an example of a standard from The National Council of Teachers of Language Arts:

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Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.

An excellent source to view state standards is [www .mcrell.org](http://www.mcrell.org)

Curriculum Frameworks are based on national and state standards. They provide teachers with an articulated curriculum so that a standards-based district, school, and classroom curriculum can be developed, organized, implemented, and assessed. The Curriculum Frameworks describe key objectives, products, tasks, and tests that students will complete to show that they have the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the learning standards.

The following is a sample from the Rhode Island Department of Education's Frameworks:

Standard 1. Communication: All students will be effective communicators in varied settings and for varied purposes.

The dynamics of effective communication are omnipresent in every aspect of our daily lives; individual, social, educational, occupational and civic. This requires the ability to listen, speak, view, read and write effectively. Students must understand how to gather and use information to work with others, solve conflicts and share decisions. Students will also understand the barriers to effective communication and ways to overcome those barriers in sending and receiving information.

Descriptors

Students will use language arts for self-understanding and personal expression.

Level 1 (Grades K-4)

Students will be made aware of ways that communication is used to select, express, and accommodate personal interests, needs and ideas of self and others.

Level 2 (Grades 5-8)

Students will use communication to select, express, and accommodate personal interests, needs and ideas of self and others.

Typically, this is followed by actual lesson plans that align with the standard.

State and local curriculum guides provide teachers unit and daily lesson plans. Instructional materials, including those for students in need of additional assistance are available to support teachers' instruction. Various assessment tools are included in the curriculum guides (state and commercially developed tests, performance assessments, standardized tests).

Usually the daily objectives and activities (what teachers and students do together every day) are not spelled out in the document. Teachers and principals in each school carry out the task of creating daily objectives and activities.

Scope and sequence of behavior are usually determined at the local level by teachers and administrators. State standards are the guiding force. The purpose of a scope and sequence is to

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inform teachers at each grade level what material they are to teach. By viewing the sequence of a particular concept, such as the geography theme of location, teachers are aware of what background knowledge students have, what they are expected to teach during the year, and what students will learn in the future.

The following is a K-12 geography example of scope and sequence:

Geography	Standard	Benchmarks	Examples
K-3	Concept of location: The student will use directional and positional words to locate and describe people, places and things	1. Students will use maps and globes to locate places referenced in stories. 2. Students will explain that an address locates a specific place	1. near/far, Above/below, left/right, behind/ in front 2. Street address
4-8	Concept of location: The student will identify and locate major countries, events and cultural features	1. Students will locate the major source countries for immigration to the U. S. 2. Students will locate on a map or globe the major empires of the late 19 th Century	1. Italy, Poland, Austro- Hungarian Empire 2. England, China, Germany, France, Spain, Cuba,
9-12	Concept of location: The students will use maps and globes to analyze the natures of places at a variety of scales	1. Students will locate major political and physical features of the U.S. and the world	1. Countries, overs, topographic features, largest cities

Behavioral objectives are specific, measurable outcomes that students are to demonstrate. They consist of the following three elements:

1. Condition of performance - the circumstances, commands, materials, or direction that the student is given to initiate the behavior (the instruction is not described). Ex. The student is given a map or The student is given a literary passage
2. Behavior - an action verb that promotes an observable behavior, Ex. identify, state, compute, apply (words such as understand or appreciate are not observable and so they are not appropriate)
3. Criteria for performance - describes how well the behavior must be performed correctly; usually they are stated in the form of the minimum that must be performed, Ex. in at least 8 of 10 instances, at least once per hour

Behavioral objectives serve several instructional purposes: they are the basis of lesson plans, they clarify the intent of instruction for the teacher, they are easy to assess, and they aid in communication between the school and the public.

Behavioral objectives can be written in the cognitive (Bloom's Taxonomy is a wonderful source), affective, psychomotor or speech/language domain. The following is an example of each:

Cognitive: In an oral presentation, the student will paraphrase Dr. Martin Luther Kings' I Have a Dream address, mentioning at least 3 of the 5 major points discussed in class.

Affective: In an oral presentation, the student will choose one point from Dr. Martin Luther Kings' I have a Dream address and explain how it personally influenced their life.

Psychomotor: In an oral presentation, the student will create two expressive gestures to go with their favorite parts of Dr. Martin Luther Kings' I have a Dream address.

Speech/language: In an oral presentation, the student will speak for 5 minutes on Dr. Martin Luther Kings' I have a Dream address and use correct grammar 90% of the time.

The term learner objective is synonymous with behavioral objective, performance objective, and instructional objective.

Traditionally, the state, district and teacher dictate the curriculum. Teachers prepare units and activities in advance, often a month or even a year ahead.

An emergent curriculum differs from a traditional curriculum because its' curriculum builds upon the interests of students. It is a mixture of what interest's students and what educators know is important for students to learn. It is often spontaneous and responsive to the immediate interests of a group of students. Units and activities are driven by the ideas, information and questions of the students. Each unit may last anywhere from a day, to a week, to a month. The length of study is determined by student interest. Emergent curriculum evolves through adult/student collaboration.

Guiding Principles for an emergent curriculum:

1. Students are viewed as competent, reflective and curious; this perspective shapes the teacher's curricular decisions.
2. Students are encouraged to explore, communicate, and collaborate without time restrictions
3. Teachers observe students to determine the group and individual needs and interests; these observations guide the curriculum planning
4. Students are given multiple opportunities to think critically, explore, and revisit areas of interest
5. Teachers document student learning and experiences as a tool for further learning and as a way to communicate with families
6. Teachers encourage collaboration outside the classroom with parents, extended family and the community.

Project-based learning has the following characteristics, it is:

1. Relatively long-term
2. Problem based
3. Interdisciplinary
4. Student-centered

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5. Real-world application

Students approach a project by asking questions, making predictions, designing plans, experimenting, collecting and analyzing data, and drawing conclusions. Assessment is through an artifact (models, reports, videotapes, computer programs) created by the student. Project-based learning often offers the student an opportunity to communicate ideas to peers and community members. Teachers are primarily seen as facilitators. Projects may be part of a thematic unit.

Thematic units are integrated curriculum drawn from different subject areas all focused on one theme. This is considered a more natural way to learn in comparison to viewing the world from separate subject areas. Teaching thematic units typically integrates broad areas of knowledge, such as social studies, mathematics, science and language arts around a central concept. The multiple subjects involved in a thematic unit foster transfer of learning from one subject area to another. It also facilitates students in making connections between the content areas.

Example: Thematic Unit on Archeology

Language Arts - students read and discuss *The Source* by Michener

Math - students plot an archeology dig

Social Studies - students study ancient civilizations

Science - conduct experiments on artifacts found in the dig

Physical Education - perform the actual dig