MAKING CHANGE LESS SCARY



Designing Evergreen Courses & Curricula

Institutional Effectiveness

Improvement Through Insight

October 30, 2026

HOUSEKEEPING ITEMS

Will there be time for questions?
Yes, there will be time for questions at the end.

Will there be a recording of the session?
Yes, we will post the recording of the presentation.

Will the slides be sent out afterwards?
Yes, we will post the slides on our website.

Will we get an email when the slides and recording are posted?
Yes, everyone who is registered for the session will receive an email with the slides and recording link.



AGENDA

- The “WHY”
- What does it mean to be “EVERGREEN?”
- Designing evergreen courses & curricula
- Common pitfalls
- Tips & Tricks

WHY ARE WE TALKING ABOUT EVERGREEN?



HIGHER EDUCATION'S BALANCING ACT

- Curricula and courses must remain relevant to students and employers.
- Curricula and courses must reflect evolving disciplines and technologies.
- However, unnecessary or frequent revisions can cause a myriad of issues.



A bulletin is active for SIX YEARS.

When a change is made to a program, you may think the old version is gone for good...

... but we are required to teach out the “dead” version for **six years** to ensure students are able to graduate.



If changes are made to a program annually, each program version must be taught out for **SIX YEARS.**



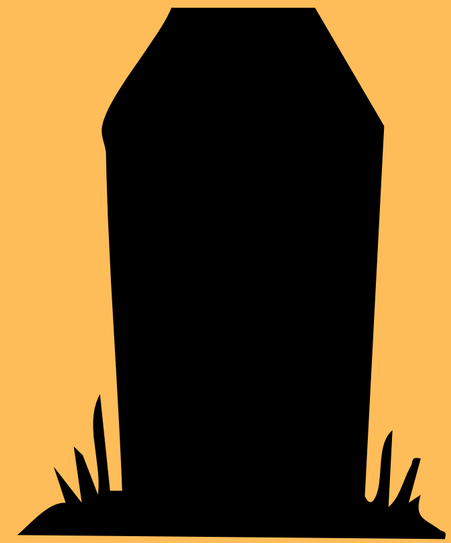
Many changes in a short period of time result in a lot of “dead” programs to manage...



CHALLENGES FROM FREQUENT REVISIONS

- Multiple active bulletins create advising complexity.
- Student confusion about program requirements.
- Faculty workload burdens associated with lengthy teach-out periods.

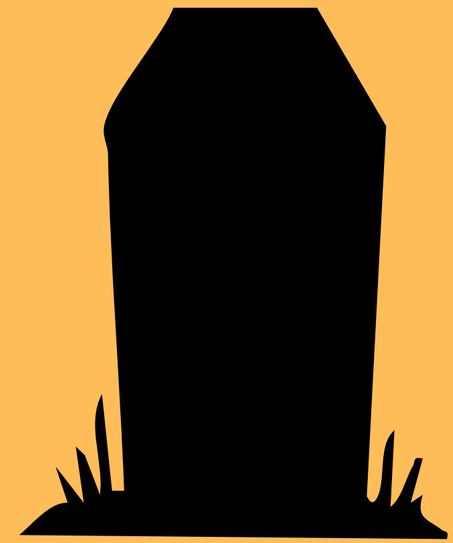




CHALLENGES FROM FREQUENT REVISIONS

- Multiple active bulletins create advising complexity.
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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE EVERGREEN?



EVERGREEN COURSES AND CURRICULA ARE...



Intentionally designed to remain effective and relevant across multiple years.

Resilient to minor changes in the field and flexible enough to accomodate emerging trends.

EVERGREEN COURSES AND CURRICULA ARE...



Designed to evolve through thoughtful management rather than constant revision (Curriculog).

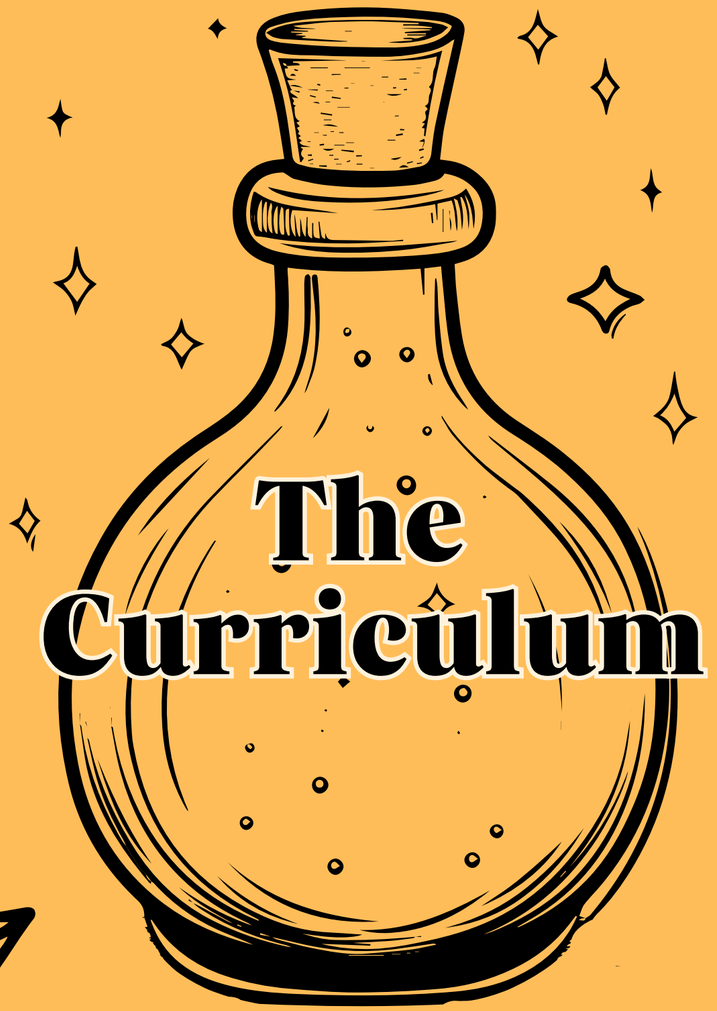
NOT permenant, unchangeable, or resistant to innovation.

CREATING EVERGREEN COURSES & CURRICULA

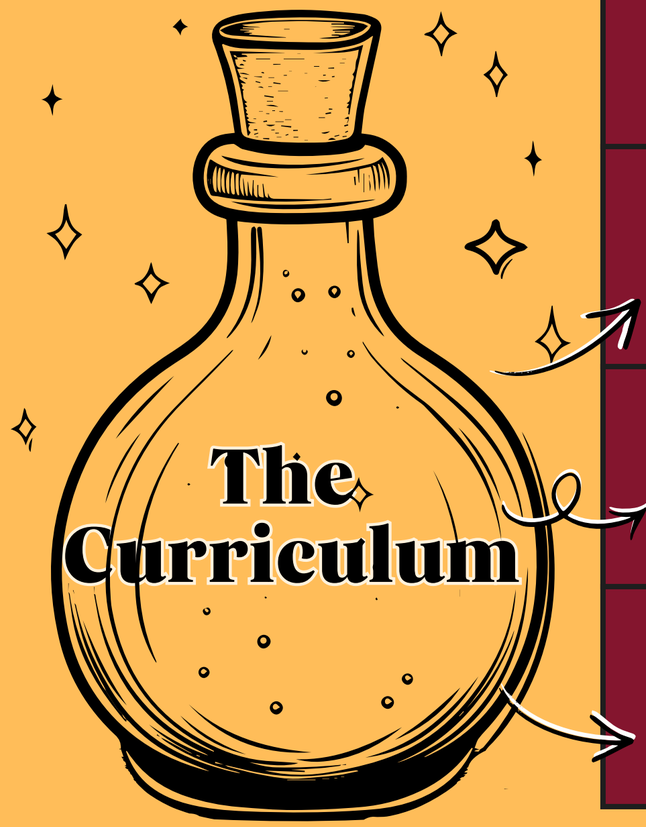


DESIGN WITH THE END IN MIND

- What is the purpose of this major?
- What skills and competencies should graduates have?
- What are the student learning outcomes?



DESIGN COHERENT CURRICULUA AND COURSES



	Course 1	Course 2	Course 3	Course 4
Program Competency #1				
Program Competency #2				
Program Competency #3				

DESIGN BASED ON COMPETENCIES



Design courses that support the curriculum, not curriculum to fit courses!

THE CURRICULUM

DEG 01	DEG 02
courses	courses

DESIGN WITH FUTURE-FORWARD THINKING

- What knowledge and skills will be valuable 5-10 years from now, not just today?
- Which concepts are fundamental versus current trends?



DESIGN STABLE AND FLEXIBLE

- The curriculum is the backbone of a program.
- Courses are used to achieve curricular goals.
- Thus, courses can be flexible while the curriculum remains stable.
- Consider which areas can accommodate change (course descriptions).



COMMON PITFALLS...





COMMON PITFALLS FOR PROGRAMS

- Building curricula around current fads, softwares, or industry buzzwords.
- Designing programs from courses.

EXAMPLE: A PROGRAM IN "SCARING"



Program description:
*This program prepares students to **jump scare** humans.*

EXAMPLE: A PROGRAM IN "SCARING"



Program description:

*This program prepares students **in the art of "scaring."** After completing the program, students will be able to **apply a variety of scare tactics for different audiences and situations**. After graduation, students are prepared to work for supervillians, antagonists to humankind, and general no-good-doers or to pursue a graduate degree in villainy.*



COMMON PITFALLS FOR COURSES

- Building courses around current fads, softwares, or industry buzzwords.
- Building courses around select faculty interests without connection to the curriculum.
- Building courses that only one faculty member can teach.

TIPS & TRICKS



TIPS & TRICKS

Variable Topics Courses

- Consider implementing a variable/current topics course.
- Variable/current topic courses can be general electives or required courses.
- The topic of the course section is included on students' transcripts.



TIPS & TRICKS

Variable Topics Course Example

EVL 466 - Special Problems

Variable topics in evil education. Course may be repeated for credit.

H001 - The Undead in the Living World

H002 - Modern Henchmanship

H003 - Trends in Reanimation



TIPS & TRICKS

Microcredentials



Certificates and badges allow students to earn additional workforce competencies and/or industry certifications.

Allows programs to offer additional competencies and credentials without having to undergo major revisions.

TIPS & TRICKS

Consider how changes will impact student progression (Curricular Analytics) and assessment of the program.



TIPS & TRICKS

- When creating and revising courses and programs, use language that focuses on student outcomes, not products, trends, etc.
- Ask yourself: “Will this be relevant in six years?”



EVERGREEN IS...



Intentional

Coherent

Outcome-driven

Stable but flexible

Future-forward

QUESTIONS?



Institutional Effectiveness

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