



2019 Texas Conference on Introductory History Courses

The Contexts of our Introductory Courses: Questions to Consider

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from Jones, McInerney, *Faculty and the Degree Qualifications Profile: Questions of Learning*
<http://degreeprofile.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Thinking-professors-guide-to-DQP.pdf>

It's both common and appropriate to think about teaching in terms of our individual interests, assumptions, and goals. The questions below suggest an additional possibility, helping faculty reflect on our work in the classroom from the perspectives of a course, disciplinary curriculum, general education program, and/or set of institutional learning goals.

What roles do we play on each of these levels? These questions help highlight what we do, why we do it, and how we know we have achieved it, articulating what students are learning.

Understanding my course

1. Who takes my course?
2. Why do they take my course?
3. What are my expectations for students entering my course? What do I assume they already know, understand, and can do?
4. What do I expect students finishing my course to know, understand, and do?
5. How do I demonstrate that they know, understand, and can do those things?
6. What courses are my students coming from and how does my course prepare them for their next course?

Understanding my role in our major

1. Who takes my course in our major, and why do they take it?
2. What are the outcomes for our major?
3. Which of those outcomes are addressed in my course?
4. What can professors who will teach my students next assume they know, understand, and can do because of my course?
5. What evidence can I use to demonstrate that students know, understand, and can do those things?
6. How do I explain to students in our major the core knowledge and proficiencies their coursework develops?
7. What theories and practices do I use to ensure they have those proficiencies?
8. What pedagogies have I tried that I would not use again? Why?
9. What assignments allow students to demonstrate they have met the outcomes for the major and the course?
10. What outcomes from General Education are reinforced or built upon in my course?

Understanding my role in our General Education program

1. Is my course a general education course, major course, or both?
2. Are there general education outcomes for my course that differ from the outcomes for our major courses?

3. Why is my course a general education course?
4. What do general education courses of this kind (i.e. humanities, life sciences, etc.) assure that students know, understand and are able to do in their domain?
5. How do I explain to non-majors the transferable skills my General Education course develops?
6. What proficiencies in our degree profile does this course strengthen?
7. How can I demonstrate my General Education course's contributions to the overall degree proficiencies of my institution?
8. How does my General Education course prepare students for the next course they will take? At what level are those courses? (This is not about sequences; it is about general intellectual preparation without regard to a student's major.)

Understanding my role in our institution's learning goals

1. What proficiencies are upper division students [post-General Education or Associates degree] at my institution expected to demonstrate?
2. What proficiencies are graduating students at my institution expected to demonstrate?
3. To which of these proficiencies does my course contribute?
4. How can I demonstrate my course's contributions to our degree profile proficiencies?
5. What proficiencies do my major courses develop best?
6. Which degree proficiencies are not developed in my course?