BACKWARD
COURSE DESIGN

Using backward course design will help you execute your vision for the course by helping you to determine your learning outcomes, assessments, and plans.

THINK "BIG PICTURE"

When creating or revising a course, start by reflecting on the course's purpose. Using reflection questions will help guide your course creation process and keep you focused on achieving your outcomes.

Ask yourself: What is the main goal I want to achieve by the end of the course? How can I achieve this goal? What will my students know and do if they're successful?

MAKE IT TANGIBLE

With your "big picture" theorizing done, it's time to think about how your students *demonstrate* their learning and how you *determine* their level of proficiency. You'll need to assess at the introductory, developing, and mastery levels.

Ask yourself: What no-stakes or low-stakes assignments will help them develop? What culminating assessments will allow them to demonstrate their mastery?

PLAN IT OUT

Having assessments in place can help you plot out the major signposts for the course. Now, you will want to think about the lessons and the activities that will develop your students, so that they can be successful at each of the signposts you have created along the way.

Ask yourself: What lessons and activities do I need to deliver and when? What relationship do they have to one another? What deliverables do I have and/or need to create?

END WITH DETAILS

Finally, you're ready for details, which includes everything from the syllabus to the day-to-day lesson plans. At this point, you will want to think about how you can tailor your materials to your unique learners and their needs.

Ask yourself: What guidelines can I put in place to support learners? How will I present them? What materials do learners need? What resources do I need to find or create?