Essential Questions, Standards, and Objectives

EDSC 182: Week 3

Agenda

- Opening and Announcements
  - RevisitOrmrod graphic organizer (from last class)
- Guiding Questions Warm Up
- Lecture
  - Defining Terms (+ a few examples)
  - Models of Curriculum Design
  - Writing “good” essential questions & objectives
- Pair Activity – Write your own EQ & objective
- Closing: Revisit final guiding question
  - For next time: Read Schultz & Shepard

Quickwrite

- What are the defining characteristics of a formative assessment?
- What is ONE example of a formative assessment?
Guiding Questions for Today

- What are standards?
- How can standards be used most effectively by teachers and schools?
- What are the potential misuses of standards?
- What is the difference between a standard, an essential question, and an objective? What do they have in common?

What are Standards?

- In a small group discuss the guiding questions. Draw on the readings as resources to:
  - Define “standards”
  - Explain how standards can be used effectively by teachers and schools
  - Generate and evaluate the potential misuses of standards

Hierarchy of “Standards”

- Holistic Learning Outcomes (HLOs)
- Essential Questions
- Content Standards
- Objectives
Defining Terms

**Holistic Learner Outcomes**,
- The most general statement of what students should know and be able to do
- Not discipline specific
- Examples
  - Lifelong Learning Exit Standards (p. 87)
  - Essential School-Wide Learning Results (ESLRs)

**ESLRs Example – Santa Clara High School**

"Our goals are to develop students who are:
- effective communicators
- contributing citizens
- informed and productive thinkers
- self-directed learners
- collaborative workers
- and skilled information processors.

Defining Terms

**Essential Questions** (Wiggins pp.80-82)
- Go to the heart of the discipline
- Have no one obvious right answer
- Are “higher order” -- students must go beyond the information given
- Recur and are raised naturally (spiral curriculum)
- Provoke and sustain interest
- Link to other essential questions
Defining Terms

**Content Standards:**
- Define overarching knowledge, skills and abilities in a discipline
- Provide the big picture of what students should know and be able to do in a course or discipline
- Examples (from San Jose Unified), pp. 105-122

Defining Terms

**Objectives:**
- Specify how the standard is assessed/demonstrated
  - At the unit or lesson level
  - What the student will be able to do as a result of instruction!
- **Not** instructional activities!
- **Avoid inferential language!** (e.g., understand, know)
- See Bond’s notes, pp. 176-177

Rationale???

**Essential questions, standards and objectives are used:**
- To plan instruction
- As criteria for developing assessment tools
Whittaker’s Model (CIAS)

- Curriculum - resources, materials
- Instruction - activities, tasks, teacher and student actions that support learning
- Assessment - tools and techniques for understanding what has been learned
- Students - prior knowledge, experiences, interests, ways of being and knowing

Whittaker’s Model: Relationship to Standards

- Standards are at the core of “CIAS”

Bond’s Criteria for Evaluating Goals/Standards/Objectives

- Utility (relevance): How useful is the goal or objective as an instrument for living? For the individual? For society?
- Durability: How long will the learning last?
- Transferability: How much of the learning promotes the learning of other abilities?
Writing “good” objectives

- Stated in terms of student learning:
  - The student will be able to… (TSWBAT)
  - Not what the student will do
- Use non-inferential language
  - See Bloom’s taxonomy for a good list of verbs (p. 123, p. 311)
- May include clarification or criterion
  - But don’t be neurotic about specification

Examine some examples

See reader pages 91–93

- Are these standards or objectives?
- How do they stack up to UDT?

Examine some examples

With a partner in your content area:

- Examine your own content standards
- What level of specificity? EQ, S or O?
Your Turn

- Write one Essential Question for a unit that you are currently teaching or planning to teach.
- Write one objective related to the EQ above.
- Share with a partner in your content area and provide feedback to each other.
- Evaluate the UDT of your EQs & objectives

Unit Planning Matrix*

- Key Components
  - Big Ideas
  - Skills & standards
  - Student & family knowledge
  - Assessment
  - Instructional strategies
  - Resources & materials

*Adapted from Starlight Professional Development School using key elements of Wiggins and McTighe's "BACKWARDS DESIGN"

Unit Planning Matrix

- Helps you use what you know about your students to design instruction and assessment
- Aligns curriculum, instruction and assessment with your essential questions, standards, and objectives
- Ensures that assessments are valid and practical (and maybe reliable and standardized)
Assignment Description

See syllabus page 4

What do you produce?
- Planning matrix for a short unit (1 week, or 5 days of instruction)
- 3 page rationale for your design of the unit including how you have considered CIAS and RSVP issues (see critiquing questions and rubric)
- Not a complete lesson plan for each day!

Assignment Description

How to get started?
- Begin with what you know about students in relation to course requirements, and expected content standards
- Develop essential questions
- Move back and forth across columns in any order -- interactive and iterative not sequential!

Example

My unit planning matrix for the first part of this course
Closing - Discussion

- What is the difference between a standard, an essential question, and an objective?
- What do they have in common?

For Next Time --

- Read Schultz case (pp. 125-132); Shepard (pp.133-137)
- During/after reading… identify issues and problems found in the Schultz case that are linked to key course concepts
- Bring 3 copies of an assessment that you recently gave

You will need the critiquing questions and rubric for the Unit Planning Matrix assignment (in your Reader), in addition to the Schultz case during next week’s class.