# Summer Syllabus Worksheet

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# Situational Factors

## DIRECTIONS:

*In this section, please identify situational factors that will influence your course. (Replace the [INSERT TEXT HERE] text with your own information.) The more details you provide, the more likely you will be able to prepare a meaningfully integrated course designed for significant learning.*

*For Dee Fink’s description of Situational Factors, please refer to Page 2 in the article* [*Integrated Course Design, Idea Paper #42*](https://www.ideaedu.org/idea_papers/integrated-course-design/)*.*

### 1. Specific Context of the Teaching and Learning Situation

* How many students are enrolled in your course?
* Is the course lower division, upper division, or graduate level?
* How will the course be delivered: online, or in a classroom or lab, or a combination?
* What physical elements of the learning environment will affect the course?
* What technological elements will affect the course?
* Do your course outcomes require special equipment or prior learning experience?

[INSERT TEXT HERE]

### 2. Expectations of External Groups

* What are society's expectations of students enrolled in general or with regard to this particular subject?
* Are there any professional society's accreditation requirements related to goals of this learning experience?
* What curricular goals/outcomes of the institution or department will affect this course or program?
* Are there any standards or expectations for this course (from other sources) that must be met?
* Are there professional standards or particular competencies that will be tested?

[INSERT TEXT HERE]

### 3. Nature of the Subject

* Is the subject matter convergent (working toward a single right answer) or divergent (opening up to multiple possibilities)?
* Are the topics addressed discrete and independent, or do they build on one another?
* Is the subject primarily cognitive or does it include the learning of physical skills as well?
* Is the field of study relatively stable, in a period of rapid change, or in a situation where competing paradigms are challenging each other?
* What purpose does this course serve in the students' education?
* What will the students use from your course in other courses?
* Are your goals articulated with the next level of course in mind?
* Are the connections between this course and their broader education clear to students?

[INSERT TEXT HERE]

### 4. Characteristics of the Learners

* Are you familiar with or could you predict the life situations of your students in this course: are they or will they be typically full-time students? Or primarily part-time working students, with family and work responsibilities?
* In our current context, do you know if your students will be participating in your course from campus, from their own domestic residence, from another person’s home, from a foreign country? Will they be managing dependents or dealing with care-giving while participating in your course?
* What life or professional goals of students relate to this learning experience? What are the students' reasons for enrolling?
* What are the students’ prior experiences, knowledge, skills, and attitudes toward the subject (again, as far as you know)?
* Do any students have accommodation needs? Are you aware of students' learning preferences?
* What motivates these students? Are they self-starters, responsible learners, or beginning undergraduates?
* Finally, from your perspective: how could you discover the above information about your students? And what knowledge, skills and attitudes should your students leave this course with?

[INSERT TEXT HERE]

### 5. Characteristics of the Instructor

* What is your level of competence and confidence in this subject area?
* What are your prior experiences, knowledge, skills and attitudes with regard to the process of teaching?
* What are your prior experiences, knowledge, skills, and attitudes with regard to the specific subject of this course?
* What are your instructional strengths and in which areas do you need to grow?
* How much time do you have to develop this course?

[INSERT TEXT HERE]

### 6. Additional Resources

* Are there any additional information sessions or teaching support services needed to enhance your teaching of this course? This might include online modules, consultations or training sessions with educational technology staff, consultations with library staff, consultations with laboratory technicians, etc.
* What about collaboration with, or special training of, teaching assistants?
* Is any special equipment or software needed to support your course?
* Finally, what student feedback can you draw on to help you shape your course? Do you have access to the course evaluation data and student comments from previous iterations of the course, to help identify key themes in how students responded to the course? If you are teaching a new course that has never been evaluated, what information could colleagues provide about their experiences in similar courses that might help guide your thinking?

[INSERT TEXT HERE]

Situational Factors Analysis Worksheet adapted from:

Fink, D. (2003). *Creating Significant Learning Experiences: An integrated approach to designing college courses*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Lamonica, C. (2015). *Design Your Course* online module. Normal, IL: Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology, Illinois State University. Available: <https://ctlt.illinoisstate.edu/pedagogy/modules/design/module1/>

#  Course Goals and 3-Column Table

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Lightbulb | Brainstorm Course Goals & Big Ideas:[INSERT YOUR COURSE GOALS HERE] |

* Developing learning outcomes as a foundation of course design means that the context of the learning will always be emphasized, and courses focus on the knowledge and skills that will be most valuable to the student now and in the future. Learning outcomes point to useful methods of assessment and allow instructors to set the standards by which the success of the course will be evaluated.
* Review CTSI’s resource on [Developing Learning Outcomes](https://teaching.utoronto.ca/teaching-support/course-design/developing-learning-outcomes/) and draft 3-4 in the table below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES** | ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES | LEARNING ACTIVITIES |
| 1. |  |  |
| 2. |  |  |
| 3. |  |  |
| 4. |  |  |

Retrieved and adapted from:

Fink, L. D. (2016, August). *Design Tips and Forms*. Designing Significant Learning Experiences.

#  Assessment Idea and Scaffolding

* Now focus on the 2nd column in the above table: **Assessment Activities**. Use these prompts as a guide:

**Format/Topic:**

Briefly sketch out your idea. What format will the assessment take?

## QUESTION #1

What are you asking students to do? (provide, if possible, assessment prompts or basic instructions)

## QUESTION #2

Why are you asking students to do this? (What skill/knowledge area are they building? What learning outcome(s) does this assessment connect to?)

## QUESTION #3

How will you break down (or scaffold) this assessment for students?