



TRESTLE SCHOLARS FACILITATOR REFLECTION SHEET

This reflection sheet is intended to capture your experience, feedback and advice as a facilitator of a Scholars group through the Transforming Education, Stimulating Teaching and Learning Excellence (TRESTLE) project. This report will be posted publicly as part of the group output, but you will have an option to make private comments. Please use complete sentences.

Semester and title of your TRESTLE Scholars group:

Fall 2018-Spring 2019, "Curricular mapping."

Your name: Stephanie Chasteen and Amanda McAndrew (ASSETT)

Please describe how the group went and its' activities (~ ½ page narrative. Please include: (1) the weekly list of topics, (2) how the meetings were structured, (3) any comments on the group process and how the group format was arrived at, and (4) list any products or outcomes from the group.

We have a google drive with materials available on request.

This was a combined TRESTLE Scholars Group / ASSETT Special Interest Group. Because the format was not perfectly aligned with that of a Scholars group (8 meetings in a semester), we elected to call the group a Special Interest Group to align with a less frequent exploration of a particular topic; in this case, curricular alignment. Several of the participants were ASSETT Faculty Fellows.

The group met four times (twice in Fall 2018 and twice in Spring 2019). In addition to these meetings, there were two pre-meetings in Summer 2018, plus an informational session. An outline of the sessions are below.

PRE-SESSION MEETINGS:

1. **Informational sessions.** Discussed curricular mapping and potential participants' interests.
2. **Program-level learning goals.** People brought copies of their course-level or program-level learning goals. We discussed program level learning goals and got feedback. We discussed shared values in a department and degree program and how those could lead to program level learning outcomes. Areas of overlap between disciplines were identified.
3. **Learning from UW LaCrosse.** We invited the chair and a faculty member from the physics department at University of Wisconsin LaCrosse to come talk (via Zoom) about their successful assessment process, including curricular mapping. [Read about UW LaCrosse in their case study in Phys21.](#) Resources from our discussion with them are in our Google Drive folder, including the curriculum map and sample summary report from their annual assessment meetings.

REGULAR SIG MEETINGS

Detailed agendas are available in our Curriculum Mapping SIG page upon request.

MEETING 1: WHAT IS CURRICULAR MAPPING?

- Pre-meeting: [Leading change in education](#). Optional: 8-stages of change [short article](#). [Curricular mapping article](#). Draft out an action plan using this [action plan template](#).
- Discussion: Introductions, action plans, how do you get started. Discussion of [ADKAR change model](#).

MEETING 2: WHAT DO YOU WANT TO MAP?

- Pre-meeting: [Integrating quantitative skills](#) and <https://tomprof.stanford.edu/posting/779>.
- What do you want to map? What will be helpful to move things forward in your department?
- Discussion: The content of the map. Guests: David Budd and Emily Fairfax share story from geosciences and the Course Material Auto Coder (CMAC) for crawling syllabus keywords.

MEETING 3: GENERATING CONSENSUS

- Pre-meeting: Bring an artifact to share, such as the [Learning Opportunities worksheet](#).
- Discussion: Watch portions of the [AGL webinar](#) on departmental processes. What might you learn from these examples? How will you build consensus in your department? What support is needed?

MEETING 4: PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

- Pre-meeting: Write down resources you would like to continue this work, or would have liked to have.
- Discussion: Founding director of Center for Teaching and Learning (Kirk Ambrose) joined us and participants reported out, indicating the level of time and effort required of faculty members to take on this kind of work and the need for direction from a CTL. Incentives would be valuable. Then, we discussed example curriculum maps, and wrote down action plans for next steps and shared out.

Action plan template:

1. What was your original goal?
2. What is your current goal?
3. How has your goal changed during the past year of our SIG, or what have you learned?
4. What has been the biggest challenge?
5. What are three things you would like to do in the next year?
6. What are three resources or collaborations you will need in order to accomplish those?
7. What could TRESTLE or ASSETT or this group provide you?

PRODUCTS DEVELOPED OR USED:

1. List of readings
2. Several scaffolds, such as the [Learning Opportunities worksheet](#), and an [action plan template](#).
3. A folder of example materials, such as example program level learning outcomes and example curriculum maps.
4. Flow chart of curricular mapping.
5. Position paper for Center for Teaching and Learning.

MEETING STRUCTURE:

- Each week had a topic and some short pre-readings and/or assignments.
- We met for 90 minutes.
- We had 5 participants. Most participants were the lone representative from their department. Most work was done in the whole group, but sometimes participants were paired up (e.g., to discuss their action plans).

REFLECTIONS

- The partnership between TRESTLE and ASSETT was interesting and productive. It was useful to have a partner in the planning and the literature and approaches that each facilitator was familiar with did not always overlap. Thus, it was a valuable learning experience for both facilitators, and the group was strengthened by the collaboration.
- It was very difficult to have participants who were at such different stages of curricular mapping. Some did not even know what it was, and it wasn't entirely clear why they chose to join the group. By the end, however, the reflections and comments suggest that participants did find it valuable and it opened some new doors of thinking for their departments.
- It was difficult for participants to make big changes in their departments, but small incremental changes are more likely. It seemed the SIG served that purpose best, giving participants the ability and tools to open conversations in their departments or to begin curricular mapping for a 2-course sequence.
- On a post-semester survey, two said the most useful outcome was connecting with other faculty, and two said that it was learning curricular mapping approaches. One indicated that examples (maps, goals), and two indicated that seeing other departments working on their curriculum were the most beneficial elements.
- Two indicated that having a more natural flow of conversation and a less strict agenda would have been appreciated. This is useful information, given that the facilitation did often postpone discussion topics for another day to allow conversations to be able to continue; but this still did not seem organic enough for these participants.

How did you create a sense of community, especially in the first few weeks of meetings? (This information will be useful for future facilitators)

- We started each week with some sort of share-out or discussion.

- The staggered start of the group (with some joining in the Summer before an additional recruitment push added Lisa and Sarah to the group) was awkward, though not as difficult as would have been anticipated. By the end, there was a sense that people knew where the others were at. The small group, and working in pairs once in a while, may have helped with this.

Community-building was challenging since there was a range of levels of interest and involvement in curricular mapping, and because curricular-mapping is more of a departmental-level topic rather than teaching-level. Unlike the TRESTLE Scholars, where participants can share their teaching practices and challenges, curricular mapping does not lend itself to such sharing.

What “lessons learned” came out of this semester’s Scholars Group? What recommendations would you make to another facilitator?

- Having a co-facilitator is great for coming up with quality materials, and provides some accountability to stay on target.
- Working from example seems very valuable for this topic; example processes, assessment plans, learning outcomes, and curriculum maps. Finding out what other departments do is of great interest to faculty.
- There is great benefit to just discussing curricular approaches with other faculty.
- It is very difficult to address different levels of expertise and engagement in curricular mapping. We tried to restrict the group to faculty planning to do curricular mapping and working in teams. That was not feasible (we did not have enough participants). Once we opened it up to a broader range of faculty, however, they had different goals and levels of expertise. Several reflected on this difficulty in the post-survey. A clear solution is not apparent, without more attention to curricular mapping on campus. Our recommendation would be to do this group in the future as an “awareness building” group, but for the CTL to facilitate supported groups to help engaged departments to actually do the work.
- The structure and topics of the group will, hopefully, be informative to others wishing to conduct similar discussions.

What impacts did you observe on TRESTLE Scholars? How did conversations shift, what sorts of ideas seemed most transformative for participants, what comments were made about changes in the classroom?

We observed a shift among the more novice participants from skepticism and uncertainty, to a sense of how useful curricular mapping could be. Among the more experienced participants, however, the group did not seem to have as many benefits (judging from both observation, and survey responses). Overall survey responses are positive (appreciating the opportunity), but still, some indicated that they are not sure the group will directly affect their teaching or that they will share information with colleagues.

Benefits cited:

- Networking with other faculty

- Connected with other individuals currently working on curriculum map; learned more about CMAC tool
- Learned about curriculum mapping and different approaches.
- I gained new perspectives and professional connections from the TRESTLE Scholars program this semester. I have some new ideas for teaching and new ideas for how to promote curricular goals in my department.

What worked best?

- Stephanie's facilitation
- Great access to resources - e.g., sample curriculum maps, other dept. program goals
- I appreciated the access to research information, and seeing the efforts of other departments in working on their curriculum.
- I found the connections with other faculty were the most beneficial.

What could be improved?

- Recruit more people
- I wasn't a big fan of the timer or the strict agenda. Many great conversations were cut short so that we could stick to the agenda. I would have preferred to spend more time discussing what each department is doing and what obstacles they were facing in developing/implementing a curriculum map.
- I think it's great. My program was not yet ready to implement curriculum mapping but will hopefully do so in the future.
- There were times when I thought a more natural flow of conversation would have been useful instead of a more structured format, but I appreciate the time and effort that went into preparing a very useful course. I was initially unsure about what was meant by curriculum mapping. I had the impression at the first meeting that there was an expectation that I would already be familiar with curriculum mapping and already have goals regarding it, but I had joined the group to find out more about what it was. I think that expectation of prior familiarity with curriculum mapping will really limit who can and will participate. I was also initially unclear about what the expectations were for participants, but I ultimately found being part of an interdisciplinary group to be very useful. I really appreciate the work that Stephanie Chasteen put into this group.

Anything else?

- I really really wish these sessions were attended by more faculty
- I think professors are incredibly strapped for time, and that is a constant struggle to find a way to support new ways of doing things but recognizing everyone is just too busy and stressed.

- If the goal is to get departments to do full-on curriculum mapping, then this group should be targeted towards senior faculty. If the idea is to "spread the word" about what curriculum mapping is, then I would target junior faculty. I worry, however, that these kinds of groups disproportionately attract female faculty who are asked to do university service (especially in regards to teaching) for which they receive little credit. I would consider thinking about what kinds of members of the University community are being asked to do what and whether certain University community members are bearing a disproportionate burden of this kind of service.

What recommendations do you have for TRESTLE? (Consider ways that TRESTLE could have better supported you and/or participants).

We will make some recommendations to CTL for the future. One is to offer a primer or beginner course for curricular mapping, or how to get started. We might be able to offer such a short-course for the CTL.