

## **Workshop Reflection TI 0869 - 003 Introduction to Curriculum Review**

### **Belinda Jin**

Attending the "Introduction to Curriculum Review" workshop was an enriching experience for me. The facilitators set the stage for a productive session by providing the University of Calgary's Curriculum Review Handbook beforehand. The workshop started with introductions, where each participant shared their background and reasons for attending. This opening fostered a sense of community and allowed us to gain insights into the diverse perspectives within the group. The workshop focused on understanding the curriculum review (CR) process used at the University of Calgary, strategies for involving faculty members and students, and brainstorming questions about the process. A key takeaway was the comprehensive definition of curriculum review: "a critical, evidence-based examination of academic programs for the purpose of optimizing student learning and student experience, led collaboratively by academic staff who teach in the program" (University of Calgary, 2019). This definition reinforced the idea that curriculum review is an iterative, collaborative process involving various stakeholders.

#### **Session Highlights**

One of the most compelling aspects discussed was the principle that curriculum is fluid and dynamic. Curriculum review is not a one-time effort but an ongoing process conducted every 5-7 years. This continuous improvement approach ensures that the curriculum remains relevant and effective, supporting students' learning experiences. The workshop highlighted how aligning the curriculum review process with program-level learning outcomes is crucial. Additionally, the facilitators introduced tools and data sources for CR, including curriculum mapping, student feedback, and reports from the Office of Institutional Analysis (OIA). The session emphasized that evidence-based discussions, focusing on enhancing student learning experiences, should guide curriculum review.

The workshop also delved into the roles and responsibilities involved in the CR process, emphasizing the faculty-led nature of the review. It discussed involving students through surveys, focus groups, and even student representation on the review team. Incorporating student feedback into curriculum evaluation was identified as a best practice, as it provides a more holistic view of the program's strengths and areas needing improvement. This aligns with the guiding principles that emphasize the collaborative, evidence-informed nature of curriculum review and its focus on enhancing student learning.

#### **Application to My Teaching Practice**

The insights gained from this workshop have significant implications for my teaching practice. One of the immediate applications is adopting a more structured approach to involving students in the curriculum review process. Traditionally, my curriculum review has been limited to student course evaluations and my own observations of the curriculum. However, the workshop has shown the importance of engaging students more directly in the process. Moving forward, I plan to implement focus groups and surveys with

purpose-driven questions to capture students' experiences with specific aspects of the course, such as content relevance, learning activities, and assessment structure. Involving students as co-contributors to curriculum review will not only enhance the evaluation process but also foster a more student-centred learning environment.

Another takeaway was the workshop's emphasis on constructive alignment as well. Revisiting these components during curriculum review will allow for a critical examination of whether the course meets its intended outcomes. For instance, if student feedback indicates that certain learning objectives are not being adequately achieved, I can modify instructional activities and assessments accordingly. This approach aligns with my goal of creating a responsive learning environment that evolves based on students' needs and feedback.

Additionally, the concept of recognizing what is working well, rather than solely focusing on areas for improvement, is a perspective I plan to incorporate into future curriculum reviews. Acknowledging successes, based on both student feedback and my observations, can help build on the course's strengths while addressing identified gaps. This balanced perspective will guide me in maintaining high standards of excellence while promoting a culture of continuous improvement.