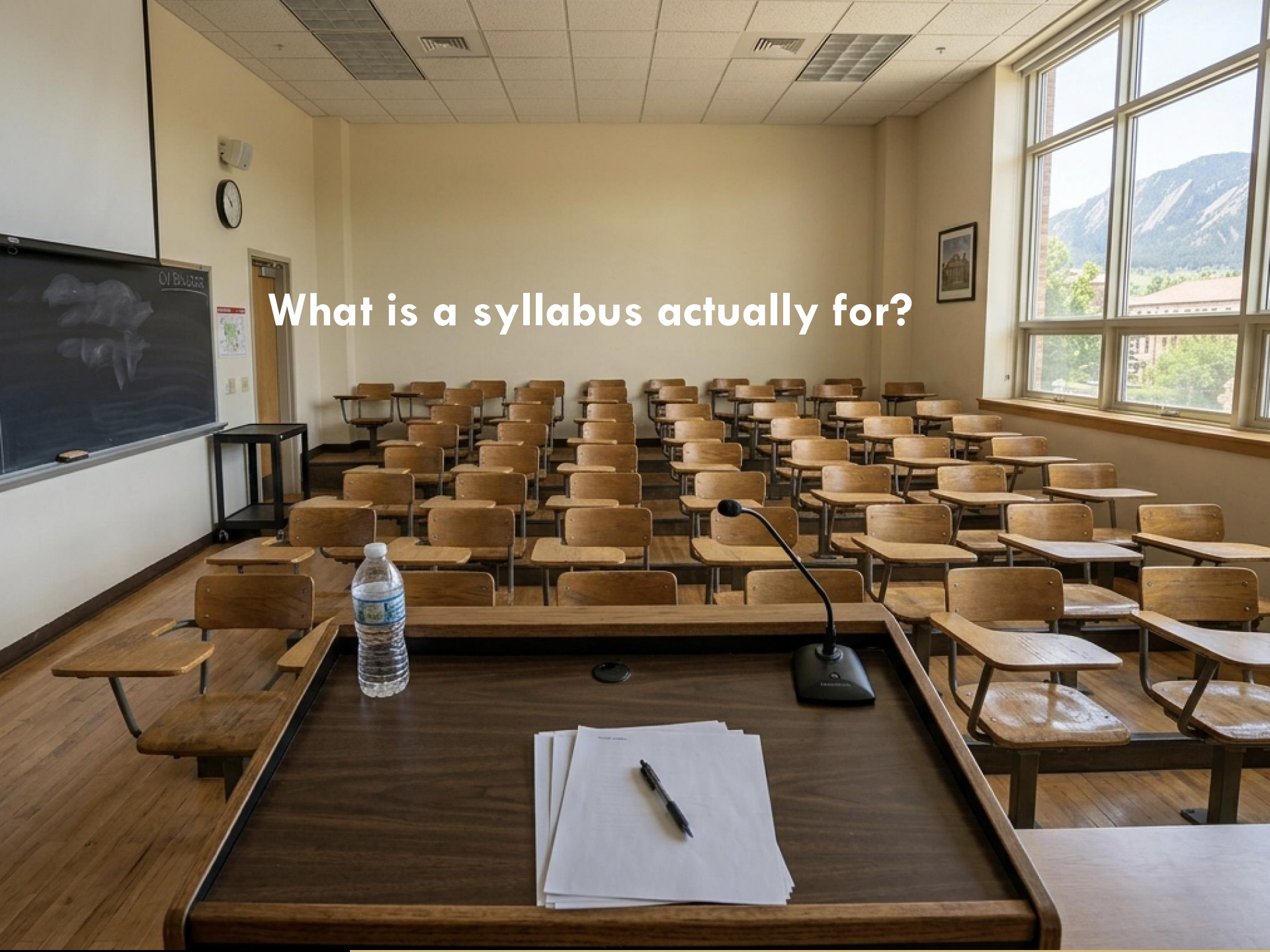

Backward Designing your Syllabus

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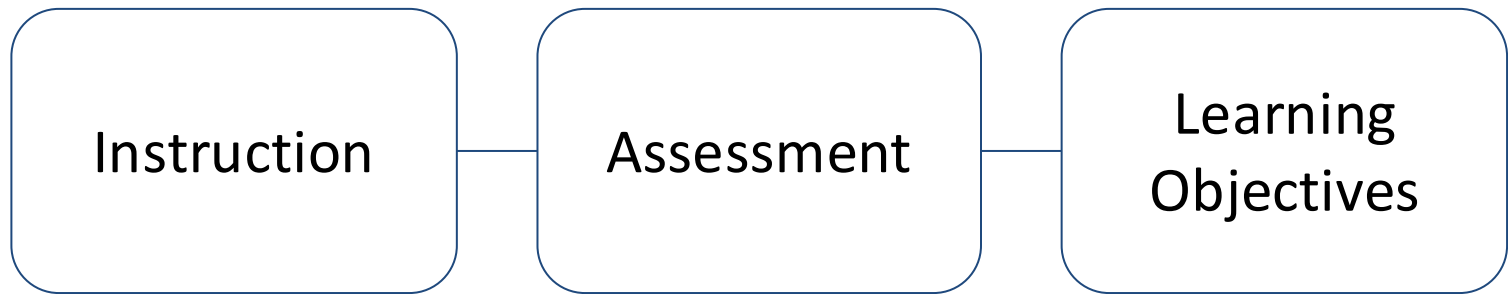
University of Colorado Boulder



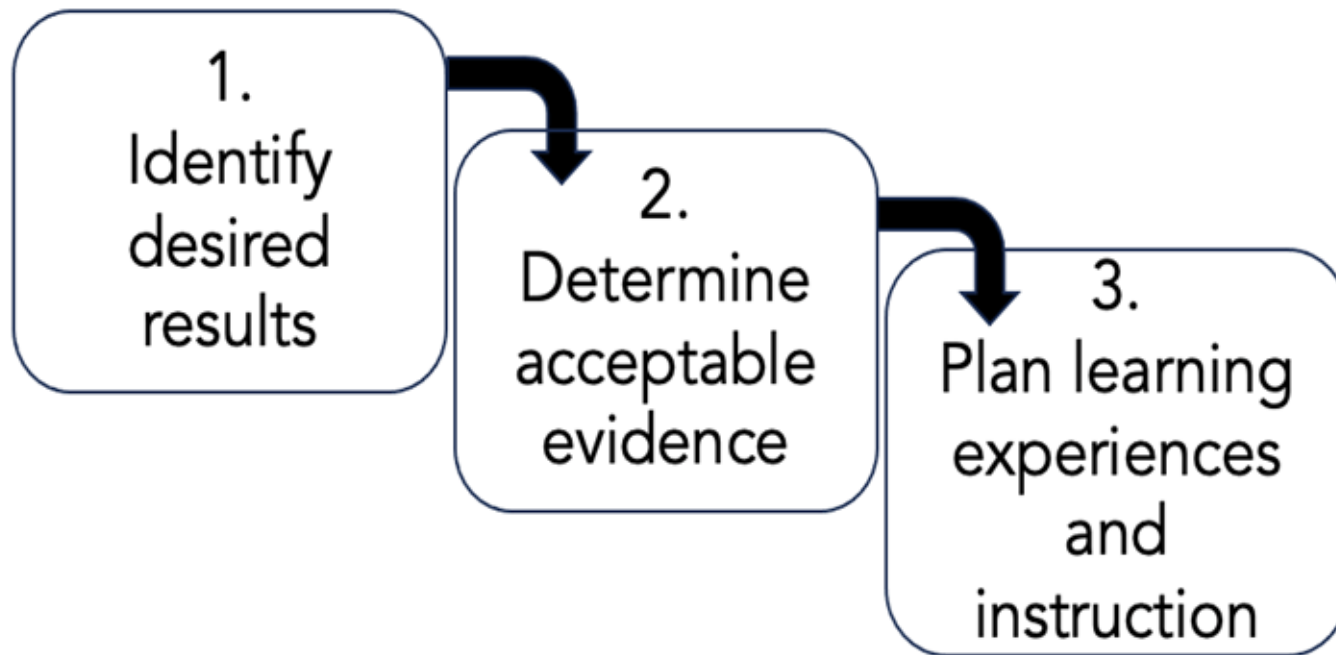
A photograph of an empty classroom. In the foreground, a wooden desk is set up with a water bottle, a microphone, and some papers. The room is filled with rows of wooden desks and chairs. On the left, there is a chalkboard with some writing and a clock on the wall. On the right, a large window provides a view of a mountain landscape. The text "What is a syllabus actually for?" is overlaid in the center of the image.

What is a syllabus actually for?

Alignment

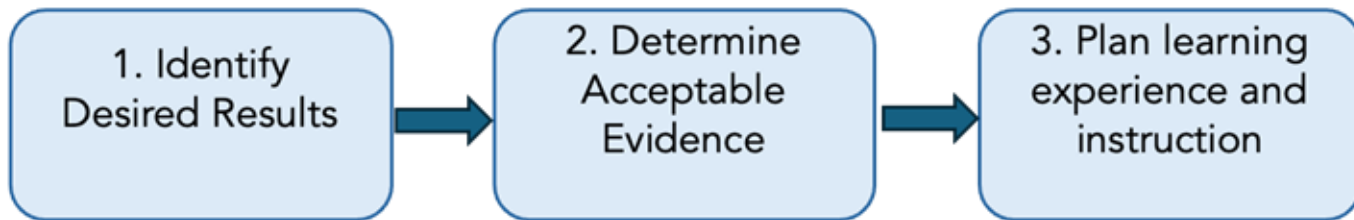


Backward Design

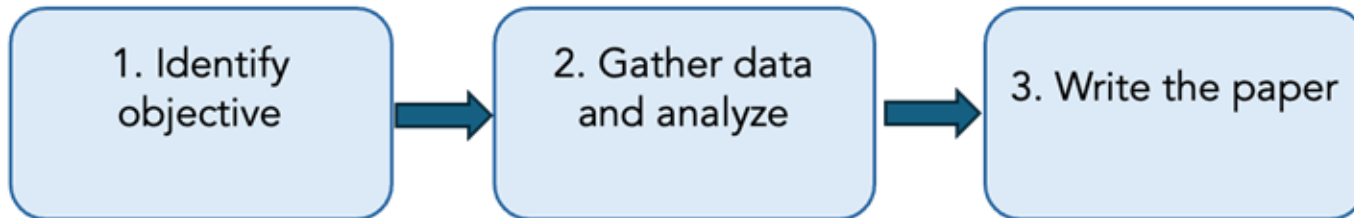


Wiggins, G. P., & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by design*. Ascd.

An analogy you already know



Similar to:

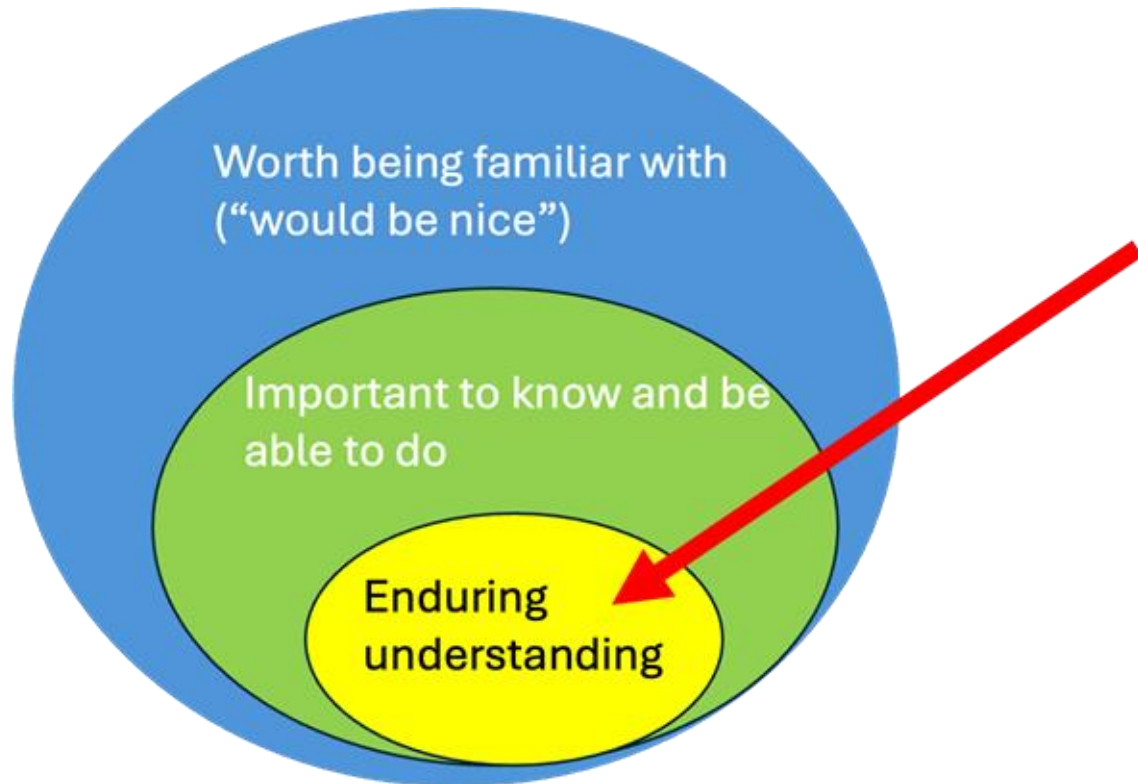
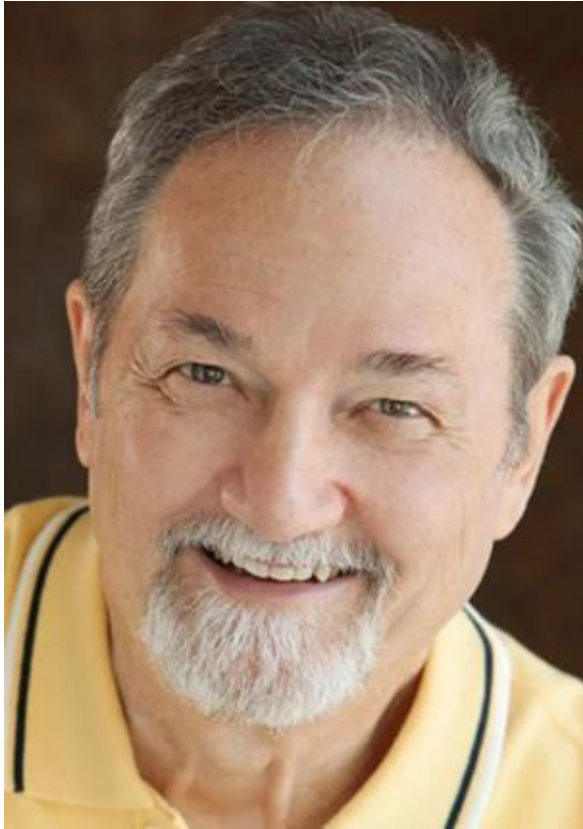


What's the objective?



Author / Cartoonist: Bud Blake (Julian "Bud" Blake)

Start with the objective



Bad Example

I want students to understand that the monocentric model replicates the behavior in most American cities.

Bad Example

No, not a learning goal, this just says what
the content is

I want students to understand that the
monocentric model replicates the behavior
in most American cities.

Better Example

I want students to leave my course having understood that:

Economics develops mathematical models that are useful to solve many issues, but we must not lose sight that reality is very complex.

Better Example

I want students to leave my course having understood that:

It is difficult to isolate the effects of a policy empirically to provide evidence of its effects.

Evidence

- Be able to solve a mathematical problem set with commute models between the center and the suburbs
- A short memo analyzing congestion pricing (or housing policies or the creation of a Rapid Bus Transit System)

Learning Experience

ENTRANCE TICKET

Listening to a podcast about congestion pricing in NYC

DURING CLASS

Discussing congestion in NYC and solving a mathematical model in class.

EXIT TICKET

Work in groups to develop a short memo and read it aloud.

Example Managerial Economics

Objective (Bloom level)	Evidence	Learning Experience
Students will be able to EVALUATE a firm's pricing strategy under imperfect competition using marginal analysis (Evaluate)	A short, applied pricing memo analyzing a real or disguised firm case	In-class case discussion followed by a pricing negotiation simulation between student "firms"

Example Statistics

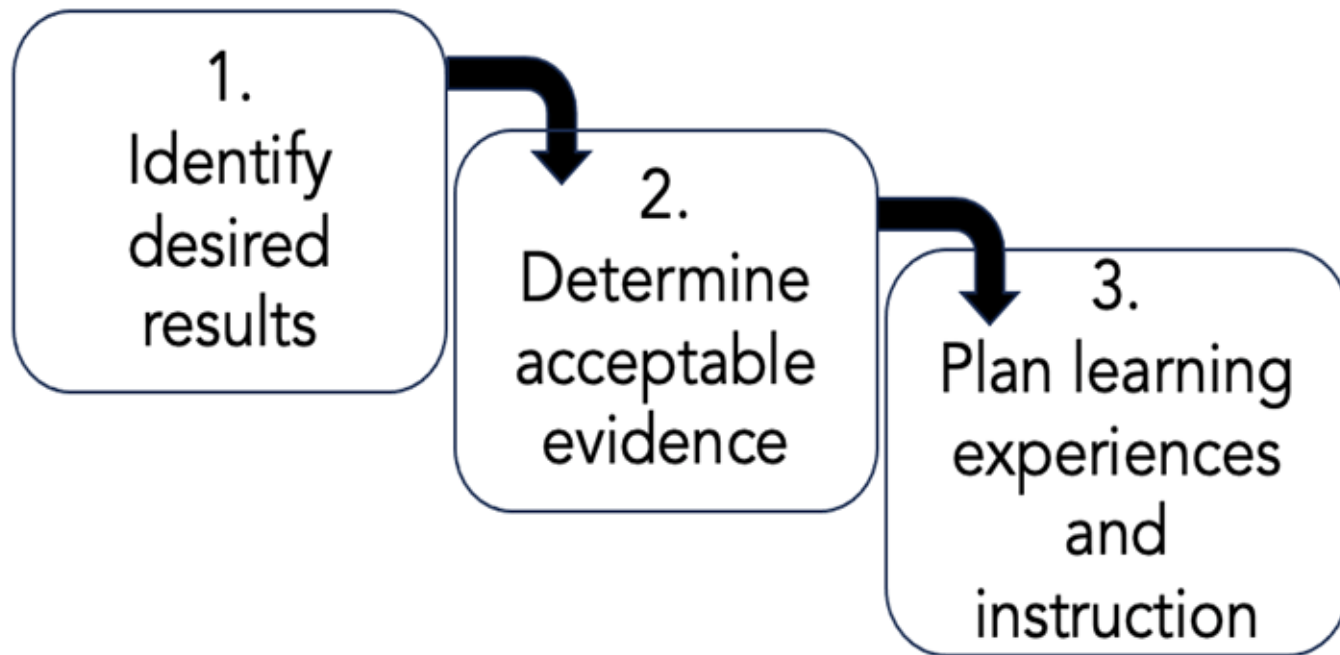
Objective (Bloom level)	Evidence	Learning Experience
Students will be able to INTERPRET a p-value in the context of a real economic dataset (Interpret / Apply)	A short data-analysis write-up using an actual economic dataset, not a textbook example	Hands-on lab session running the test in R or Excel on that dataset, with peer review of interpretation before submission

Write your own

Write one measurable learning objective
Using a Bloom's verb for a single class session

Takeaway

Treat your syllabus like a research paper:



Thanks

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