A Foundations of Learning course teaches first-year students how to learn and become self-growers, instilling in them the characteristics of a collegiate learner who will succeed in any undergraduate program.

The Curriculum

The novel idea of teaching students **how to learn** as they enter college arose from the many workshops and discussions that took place during the first annual Problem Solving Across the Curriculum Conference (Kramer & Beery, 1990). With the help of more than 20 faculty members, 21 different learning activities were created and then carefully assembled into *Learning Through Problem Solving* (Apple, Beyerlein & Schlesinger, 1992), a curriculum for incoming first-year students. This curriculum was designed to help students improve their capacity for learning, problem solving, writing (journals and reports), giving presentations, computing, and analyzing (graphs and data). The purpose and features of this course were offered in *A Foundations Course for College Freshmen* (Baehr & Apple, 1994) and the first published implementation of this ideal course was *Foundations of Learning* (premarket edition)*, (Pacific Crest, 1995). Based on feedback and assessments gathered during the 1995/1996 academic year, Pacific Crest announced publication of the first edition of *Foundations of Learning* in 1996 (Krumsieg & Baehr). This refined resource provided activities and methodologies to help faculty facilitate students in improving their ability to learn, read, write, work in teams, process information, communicate, assess, manage, and make the transition to college. The learning activities in *Foundations of Learning* were also designed to help students develop transferable

learning skills, as set out in the Classification of Learning Skills (Apple, Beyerlein, Leise, & Baehr, 2007), to further ensure their success as collegiate learners.
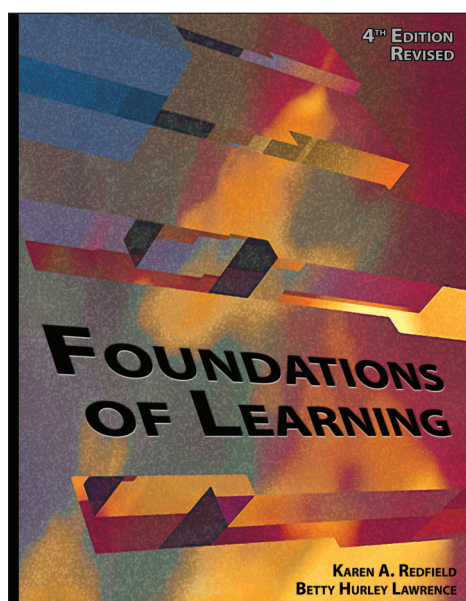
For the second edition of *Foundations of Learning* (Krumsieg & Baehr 1999), based on the expressed needs of a variety of colleges, the design of the activities was improved, and additional content was integrated. A quick yet fundamental redesign for the 3rd edition (Krumsieg & Baehr, 2000) separated the activities book from the content, such that each could be used alone.

A description of the purpose, key considerations, and the critical components of such a course are found in the *Faculty Guidebook* module, *Designing a Foundations Course* (Newgren, 2007). As Newgren shares, one of the most critical issues in creating a foundations course is a strong commitment to its success on the part of both administrators and faculty. Table 1 lists the stakeholders to a foundations course, along with the roles they should assume to ensure success for the course. Newgren's work led to the first formal course design document for a Foundations of Learning course which was created at Hinds Community College. That unpublished document for an EDU 1203 course was upgraded in 2008 by Redfield and Lawrence, even as they worked on authoring the 4th edition of *Foundations of Learning* (2009); see Figure 1 for the contents of this curriculum and course.

The most current curriculum is a one or two-credit course, *Learning to Learn: Becoming a Self-Grower* (Apple, Morgan, & Hintze, 2013) which consists of 15 weekly learning experiences designed to successfully counter the most prevalent factors that put college success at risk for many first-year students (Apple, Duncan, & Ellis, 2016).

Implementations

The first practical implementation of a Foundations of Learning course was at St. Augustine College in Raleigh NC, where the course was offered within their Learning Communities Program. As part of this program, all students attended a Learning to Learn Camp, and took both a Foundations of Learning course in the fall and a community service project course in the Spring (Knowles, 1997). The description of a very effective implementation of a foundations course may be found in Enhancing a First-Year Success Course Through Process Education (Jones & Kilgore, 2012).

Table 1 Foundation Course Stakeholders and Their Roles

Administrators
• Acknowledge the need for the course • Provide resources for course development • Identify and resolve staffing constraints, including teaching assignments within and among academic units • Be open to changes in pedagogy and program culture

Design Team
• Inventory the needs of course stakeholders • Align course outcomes with desired long-term behaviors • Select learning activities and pedagogies for the course • Assemble instructional materials • Recommend training for course instructors • Participate in regular course review activities

Course Instructors
• Attend recommended orientation sessions/meetings • Communicate and uphold course expectations • Refine activities to better meet course outcomes • Be open to exploring student-centered pedagogies • Cooperate with other instructors in delivering a common, high-quality experience to all students • Collect data on the effectiveness of learning activities for review by the instructional team • Make recommendations for how the foundations course can be leveraged in upper-level coursework

Senior Faculty
• Provide timely input to the course design team • Value the efforts of the design team and instructors • Be willing to teach a foundations course on an occasional basis to stay abreast of changes in program culture • Modify the expectations and delivery of upper-division courses to take advantage of foundations course outcomes

Support Staff
• Consult with the design team to ensure that needed resources (i.e. library, career center, and computer labs) are available for use in the course • Provide feedback on learning activities associated with the resources/services they provide • Share success stories with other units on campus

Students
• Openly communicate with peers and instructors • Actively participate in all learning activities. • Accept personal accountability for class assignments and interpersonal behaviors both in and out of the classroom • Develop a mentality of exceeding course standards, not just being satisfied with minimum acceptable performance

The content from *Foundations of Learning* is also easily adapted to disciplinary contexts, as is seen in the introduction to business course, Gateway to Business (Bobrowski & Cox, 2001), developed at SUNY Oswego, which integrated content and activities from *Foundations of Learning* within a business context (Bobrowski & Cox 2003). Illinois State University also designed their own foundations course, *Enterprise* (Newgren, 2003, 2004), to stand as the Business 100 course.

Figure 1 Contents for *Foundations of Learning*, 4th Edition

Chapter 1 Improving Performance

Activity 1.1 Building Learning Communities

Activity 1.2 Analyzing a Course Syllabus

Chapter 2 Strengthening Identity

Activity 2.1 Creating Your Life Vision Portfolio

Activity 2.2 Exploring Your Campus

Chapter 3 Reading Methodology

Activity 3.1 Using a Reading Log

Activity 3.2 Practicing the Reading Methodology

Activity 3.3 Analyzing a Literary Text

Chapter 4 Learning to Learn

Activity 4.1 Analyzing the Learning Process Methodology

Activity 4.2 Applying the Learning Process Methodology

Chapter 5 Problem Solving Skills

Activity 5.1 Analyzing the Problem Solving Methodology

Activity 5.2 Applying the Problem Solving Methodology

Chapter 6 Context of Performance

Activity 6.1 The Terminology of College

Activity 6.2 The Student Handbook

Activity 6.3 Developing an Educational Plan

Chapter 7 Addressing Personal Obstacles

Activity 7.1 Becoming a Self-Grower

Activity 7.2 Personal Development Methodology

Chapter 8 Living in the Information Age

Activity 8.1 Information Processing Methodology

Activity 8.2 Using a Software Help System

Chapter 9 Finding and Working with Sources

Activity 9.1 Academic Honesty

Activity 9.2 Team Research Plan

Chapter 10 Writing in College

Activity 10.1 Applying the Writing Methodology

Activity 10.2 Assessing and Revising

Activity 10.3 Interviewing about Reading and Writing

Chapter 11 Communication and Teamwork

Activity 11.1 Exploring Team Roles

Activity 11.2 Team Logo Competition

Activity 11.3 Team Design Competition

Chapter 12 Assessment for Self-Improvement

Activity 12.1 Exploring the Assessment Methodology

Activity 12.2 Building a Criteria List

Activity 12.3 Assessing a Work Product

Continuing the Journey

Final Activity Self-Growth Paper

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