

Curriculum Design for Christian Higher Education: Towards Transforming the Whole Person in Theological Education in India

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ABSTRACT

The curriculum serves as a foundational element in achieving the mission and vision of Christian higher education institutions, providing a structured framework for equipping individuals for life and ministry. This paper explores the significance of curriculum design in theological education, with a particular focus on the Master of Divinity program. It examines the distinction between curriculum and syllabus, surveys the historical development of curriculum design, and evaluates different types and criteria for effective curriculum construction. Highlighting the practical purpose of education, as emphasized by scholars like Fant (2018) and Young (2014), the paper underscores the broader role of curriculum in advancing the objectives of theological education. Furthermore, it addresses the complexities and debates surrounding curriculum theory and design, emphasizing its critical role in shaping the effectiveness and impact of Christian higher education.

Keywords: Curriculum, Curricula, Curriculum Design, Syllabus, Christian Higher Education, Theological Education

INTRODUCTION

The curriculum plays a pivotal role in fulfilling the purpose of an institution by aligning with its mission and vision while bringing order to Christian higher education, as outlined by various institutions. In other words, theological institutions achieve their mission and vision by designing a robust curriculum that equips individuals for life and ministry.¹ For instance, Fant writes, “The purpose of Christian higher education was practical, preparing youth for the functionalities of life.”² Fant affirms that Christian higher education should focus on equipping young people with the skills and knowledge needed for practical and meaningful contributions to society, grounded in Christian values. This paper analyzes perspectives on curriculum design, distinguishes between curriculum and syllabus, describes various types of curriculum design, and evaluates the criteria for designing the Master of Divinity curriculum.

The curriculum of an institution provides meaningful structure to Christian higher education. Why is the construction of a curriculum for Christian higher education significant? Young argues, “Constructing a curriculum is an important task because the curriculum ‘offer(s) opportunities for pupils of all ages to move beyond the experience they bring to school and to acquire knowledge that is not tied to that experience.’”³ The curriculum should serve a broader purpose, aiding in fulfilling the objectives of theological education.

The understanding of “curriculum” varies among individuals.⁴ Curriculum theorists have not reached unanimous agreement on its definition, and the history of curriculum design is marked by continual debate.⁵

¹Catholic Education Service “Religious Education in Catholic Schools,” from <https://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/schools/religious-education/item/1002967-about-religious-education-in-catholic-schools> (2025).

² Gene C. Fant Jr., “Teaching and Learning in the Humanities” in David S. Dockery and Christopher W. Morgan (Eds) *Christian Higher Education: Faith, Teaching, and Learning in the Evangelical Tradition* (Crossway: Wheaton, Illinois, 2018), 237.

³ M. Young, “What is a curriculum and what can it do?” *The Curriculum Journal*, (2014) 25, 7–13. Some institutions might use curricula that are inappropriate or outdated, they need new methods and ideas.

⁴ Ralph Tyler, *Tyler Rationale* outlined in *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction* (1949); and Elliot Eisner, *The Educational Imagination* (1979). Eisner’s emphasis on the “null curriculum” (what is not taught) and the aesthetic dimensions of education directly points to the idea that curriculum is understood differently by individuals based on their values and perspectives.

Consequently, the field of curriculum design or development has often faced criticism. Frances Klein observes, “Many educational resources go to direct and support the curriculum. Countless committee meetings are held to develop it; teachers are hired, trained, and supervised to implement it; administrators are exhorted to provide curriculum leadership as their primary role; materials are purchased to support the curriculum, and educational researchers seek bases for improving it.”⁶ This study is limited to the curriculum design of Christian higher education in theological institutions, specifically for the Master of Divinity program.

FINDINGS

The proposed curriculum design model emphasizes a collaborative, dynamic, and purpose-driven approach to curriculum development. By aligning the curriculum with the institution’s vision and mission, incorporating teachers’ insights, and addressing societal and academic needs, the model ensures that the educational offerings are both meaningful and impactful. Central to this design is the prioritization of learner-centeredness, flexibility, and interdisciplinary relationships, which together foster holistic development and prepare students for the complexities of the modern world. Regular stakeholder engagement and needs assessment guarantee the curriculum remains adaptive and relevant, bridging the gap between academic excellence and practical application. Ultimately, this model serves as a blueprint for creating a curriculum that not only fulfills institutional goals but also equips students to thrive in an ever-evolving global landscape.

Research Question

What fundamental principles should be included in the effective curriculum design for theological institutions in India?

Thesis Statement

The curriculum designed for Christian higher education in theological institutions in India should not merely engage students’ minds in the epistemological construction of knowledge but should foster the holistic transformation of individuals, promoting discipleship and evangelism with the ultimate goal of serving the church and society. Institutions must regularly revise and adapt their curriculum to address the contemporary needs and challenges of Christian higher education.

Etymology

The term “etymology” originates from the Greek word *etymon*, meaning “origin of a word.”⁷ Thus, etymology refers to the study of the origins of words. The Greek word *etymon* signifies “truth.” The Latin word *curriculum* means “a race” or “the course of a race,” and it evolved to mean “a course of study.”⁸ The plural form, *curricula*, derives from the Latin *curre*, meaning “to run” or “move quickly.”⁹

Definition (s)

The following definitions provide clarity on key terms related to curriculum design. These definitions are sourced from scholars specializing in both secular and theological higher education. Terms such as *Curriculum Design*, *Curricula*, *Curriculum*, *Syllabus*, and *Christian Higher Education* are explained in this section.

⁵ Modern curriculum theorists often approach curriculum from different perspectives. For example, Edwards, D. J., Posillico, J. J., Roberts, C., & Shelbourn, M. (2021). Curriculum development in the higher education literature: A synthesis focusing on construction management programs; Ramdass, K. R., & Mokgohloa, K. (2021). Curriculum design in higher education: A reflection; American University (2021). A Guide to Curriculum Development; SAGE Journals. (2024). A Responsible Approach to Higher Education Curriculum Design.

⁶ M. Frances Klein, “Alternative Curriculum Conceptions and Designs,” Theory Into Practice series, Vol. 25, No. 1, Beyond the Measured Curriculum (Winter, 1986), (Taylor & Frances, Ltd.), pp. 31-35.

⁷ Merriam Webster, “Definition of Etymology,” <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/etymology#other-words>.

⁸ Oxford Dictionary, “Curriculum,” <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/english/curriculum?q=curriculum>.

⁹ Kathy L. Adams and Dale E. Adams, *Urban Education: A Reference Handbook* (California: Santa Barbara, 2003), pp.33-34.

Curriculum Design

Virgil E. Herrick, a theorist in curriculum development, defines curriculum design as “a statement of the pattern of relationships which exist among the elements of curriculum as they are used to make one consistent set of decisions about the nature of the curriculum.”¹⁰ Historically, curriculum design aimed to facilitate the selection and organization of learning experiences while defining the roles of teachers and students in planning and development.¹¹ The curriculum of the institution serves as a roadmap for teachers and students. Karen Schweitzer describes curriculum design as “the purposeful, deliberate, and systematic organization of curriculum (instructional blocks) within a class or course. In other words, it is a way for teachers to plan instruction.”¹² Curriculum design in tertiary education is a dynamic field that integrates theoretical frameworks with practical applications to enhance student learning outcomes.¹³ Tertiary education aims to equip students for advanced studies or careers by offering specialized training in a particular area of expertise.

Curricula

Adams and Dale define curricula as, “Curricula may be tightly standardized or may include a high level of instructor or learner autonomy.”¹⁴ As an area of study, curricula should address “philosophical, historical, social issues, and academics.”¹⁵

Curriculum

A curriculum is broadly defined as “the totality of student experiences that occur in the educational process.”¹⁶ It shapes the learning experiences of students.

Jon Wiles defines curriculum as “a plan tied to goals and related objectives, a process of choosing from among the many possible activities those that are preferred and, thus, value-laden.” Similarly, the Oxford Dictionary defines curriculum as “the subjects that are included in a course of study or taught in a school, college, etc.”¹⁷

A Working Definition

A curriculum can be defined as the set of subjects included in a specialized course of study at a seminary, school, college, or university. It is designed in alignment with the mission, vision, core values, and objectives of a Christian institution, organization, or denomination to meet the standards set by accrediting or affiliating bodies.

Syllabus

Merriam-Webster defines a syllabus as “a summary outline of a discourse, treatise, or course of study or of examination requirements.”¹⁸ A syllabus outlines the topics to be studied within a course and serves as a guide for students to understand the grading expectations and requirements for academic success. Additionally, it

¹⁰ Edmund C. Short, *A Historical Look at Curriculum Design* (Vol. 25, No. 1, *Beyond the Measured Curriculum* (Winter, 1986), (Published By: Taylor & Francis, Ltd), pp. 3-9.

¹¹ Short, *A Historical Look at Curriculum Design*, p. 37).

¹² Karen Schweitzer, *Curriculum Design: Definition, Purpose and Types*, <https://www.thoughtco.com/curriculum-design-definition-4154176>.

¹³ The following are recent scholarly works on curriculum design, offering contemporary academic perspectives on curriculum development, including its principles and elements. Edwards, D. J., Posillico, J. J., Roberts, C., & Shelbourn, M. (2021). *Curriculum development in the higher education literature: A synthesis focusing on construction management programmes*; Ramdass, K. R., & Mokgohloa, K. (2021). *Curriculum design in higher education: A reflection*; American University. (2021). *A Guide to Curriculum Development*; and Eduplanet21 (2022) *5 Key Elements for Successful Curriculum Design*.

¹⁴ Kathy L. Adams and Dale E. Adams, *Urban Education: A Reference Handbook* (California: Santa Barbara, 2003), pp.33-34; *Curriculum*, https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=curriculum&ref=searchbar_searchhint.

¹⁵ Adams and Dale, *Urban Education: A Reference Handbook* (California: Santa Barbara, 2003), pp.33-34.

¹⁶ Jon Wiles, *Leading Curriculum Development* (California: Corwin Press, 2009), p. 2.; A. V. Kelly, *The Curriculum: Theory and Practice*, 6th Edition, (New Delhi: SAGE, 2009), 13.

¹⁷ Oxford Dictionary, “Curriculum,” https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/curriculum.

¹⁸ Merriam Webster, “Syllabus” <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/syllabus>.

includes the expectations and responsibilities of students to achieve the grades or merits associated with the course. In Christian higher education, the syllabus addresses the “what,” “why,” “when,” and “how” of implementing curricula effectively.

A syllabus will include key elements such as:

1. **Description of the Course/Subject:** This section provides a concise overview of the subject undertaken for study, emphasizing its nature, scope, and significance within the relevant field of study. It includes an exploration of the subject's theoretical and practical aspects, highlights its interdisciplinary connections, and discusses its contribution to advancing knowledge and skills in the area. This description aims to demonstrate the relevance of the subject to current academic and professional contexts, offering insights into its broader implications and applications.
2. **Learning Experience Organization:** Structuring requirements to enhance the student’s learning journey, these requirements are organized by the tutor in accordance with the nature, content, and learning outcomes of the course or subject undertaken.
3. **Grading System:** Developing a standardized system and expectation to evaluate student performance.
4. **Recommended Reading and Discussion**

A selection of scholarly books, journal articles, and periodicals is recommended, focusing on biblical and theological foundations, historical developments, and practical and contemporary scholarship.

Christian Higher Education

David S. Dockery defines Christian higher education as “a holistic call for the engagement of head, heart, and hands,”¹⁹ emphasizing the integration of intellectual, spiritual, and practical dimensions. Christian higher education seeks to prepare students to be active practitioners of faith, embodying Christian values and servanthood in a complex, ever-changing world. Unlike modern methods, the educational approaches of Jesus and Paul were adapted to their contexts, such as Jesus’ use of parables to communicate his teachings.²⁰

Formulation of Objectives

The objectives of the curriculum are designed to help students achieve specific goals by the end of the class. Key elements include:

- 1 **Content Organization:** Focusing on relevant areas of study, such as content that aligns with contemporary cultural, social, and religious contexts. The board of academic studies and the interests of the institution determine the relevance of the curriculum's content.
- 2 **Resource Quality:** Utilizing high-quality materials to deliver the curriculum, avoiding reliance on substandard resources that might dilute its impact.

Purpose of Curriculum Design

The purpose of curriculum design is to establish a systematic framework and enhance the standard of Christian higher education. As Karen Schweitzer states, “The ultimate goal is to improve the student learning experience.”²¹ Curriculum design facilitates the alignment of learning goals across different levels, ensuring

¹⁹ David S. Dockery, “Christian Higher Education: An Introduction,” in David S. Dockery and Christopher W. Morgan (Eds) *Christian Higher Education: Faith, Teaching, and Learning in the Evangelical Tradition* (Crossway: Wheaton, Illinois, 2018), p. 34.

²⁰ Matthew Ryan Hauge and Andrew W. Pitts (Eds), “Ancient Education and Early Christianity,” in *Ancient Education and Early Christianity* (Oxford: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2016), p.16.

²¹ Schweitzer, “Curriculum Design: Definition, Purpose, and Types,” <https://www.thoughtco.com/curriculum-design-definition-4154176>.

continuity and coherence from one stage to the next.²² For instance, designing a curriculum for a bachelor's degree while considering the curricula for diploma and master's degrees provides a clear understanding of educational goals at each level.

Types of Curriculum Design

There is no universal curriculum design that applies to all contexts.²³ While some scholars suggest three types of curricula, others propose four. The following classifications are derived from the works of Schweitzer,²⁴ Smith, Dewey, and Kelly. Although many other models of curriculum design exist, they are beyond the scope of this study.²⁵

Karen Schweitzer's three types of curriculum design

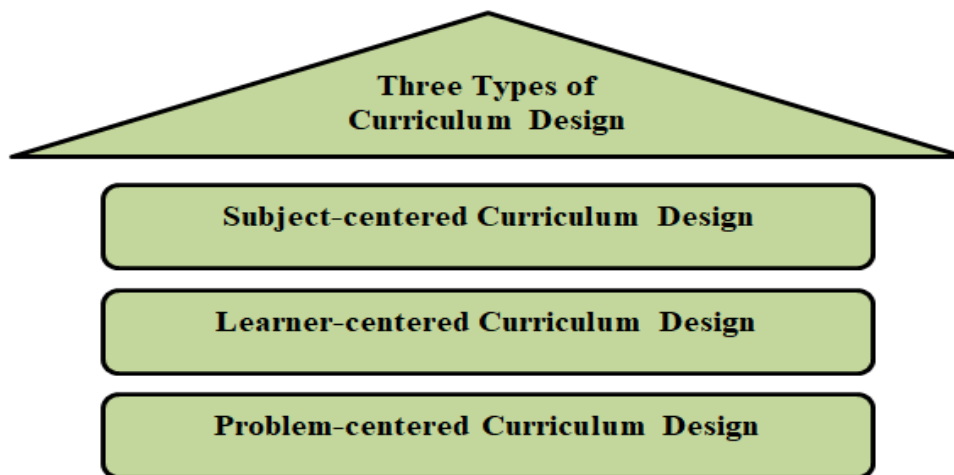


Figure 1: Karen Schweitzer's three types of curriculum design

Subject-centered Curriculum Design

Subject-centered curriculum design focuses on specific subjects or disciplines, such as missions, history, or ethics. Schweitzer refers to this as a “core” curriculum. In standardized core curricula, “teachers are provided a predetermined list of topics to teach their students, along with specific examples of how these topics should be taught.”²⁶

Learner-centered Curriculum Design

This approach emphasizes the interests and needs of individual students. Learners are given the freedom to select subjects that align with their interests, enabling them to shape their education through personal choice.

²² See Wyse, D., & Manyukhina, Y. (2024, April 17). Curriculum Development. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*. Retrieved 9 Jan. 2025, from <https://oxfordre.com/education/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.001.0001/acrefore-9780190264093-e-1860>. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.1860>; Dodd, B. J. (2021). Curriculum Design Processes. *Design for Learning: Principles, Processes, and Praxis*. https://edtechbooks.org/id/curriculum_design_process. When designing a curriculum, especially a program with multiple levels like a diploma, bachelor's, and master's degree, it is crucial to ensure that learning objectives at each level build upon one another.

²³ Meyer, A., Rose, D.H., & Gordon D, *Universal design for learning: Theory and Practice*. Wakefield, MA: CAST Professional Publishing (2014). The Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which emphasizes the need to adapt curriculum based on individual student needs, implying that a single design cannot fit all contexts; researchers like David Rose and Anne Meyer are key figures in developing UDL theory. There's no single 'right' curriculum design.

²⁴ Schweitzer, “Curriculum Design: Definition, Purpose, and Types,” <https://www.thoughtco.com/curriculum-design-definition-4154176>.

²⁵ See, for example, John Goodlad's Model (1997); Ralph Tyler's Model (1949); D. K. Wheeler's Model (1967); John Kerr's Model (1968), and Hilda Taba's Model (1960).

²⁶ Schweitzer, “Curriculum Design: Definition, Purpose, and Types,” <https://www.thoughtco.com/curriculum-design-definition-4154176>.

The learner-centered model aims to create a more personalized and engaging learning experience, fostering critical thinking, creativity, and lifelong learning.

Problem-centered Curriculum Design

Problem-centered curriculum design prioritizes the investigation of real-world issues and the development of solutions. This approach is rooted in experiential and inquiry-based learning, emphasizing critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration.

Smith, Dewey, and Kelly propose four types of curriculum design

Smith, Dewey, and Kelly proposed several perspectives on curriculum design, categorizing them into four main types. These reflect different philosophies of education and approaches to planning and implementing curriculum. Here is an overview of these four types.²⁷

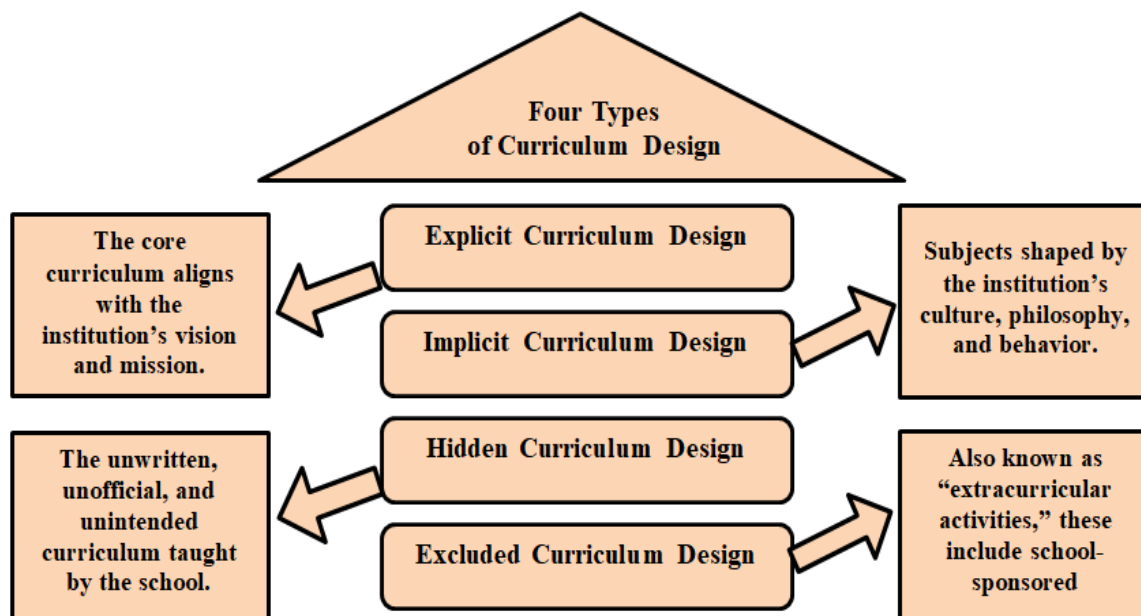


Figure 2: Smith, Dewey, and Kelly’s Four Types of Curriculum Design

Explicit Curriculum (Core Curricula)

Explicit curriculum refers to the subjects taught in alignment with an institution’s vision and mission. Often referred to as the “core curriculum,” it encompasses the essential knowledge and skills that students are expected to acquire. Accrediting agencies for Christian higher education, such as the Asia Theological Association (ATA), frequently utilize a core curriculum model for accreditation purposes.²⁸ For example, ATA proposes six integrated areas within its core curriculum for accredited institutions.²⁹

Implicit Curriculum

The implicit curriculum refers to the subjects and practices that arise from the culture, philosophy, or behavior of the institution. For example, early morning prayers and devotions hosted by the institution as part of spiritual formation for students may be a set requirement for graduation.

²⁷ J. Dewey, *The Child, and the Curriculum*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1902); T. Jeffs & M. K. Smith, (eds.) *Using Informal Education. An alternative to casework, teaching, and control?* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1990); A. V. Kelly, *The Curriculum. Theory and practice*, (London: Paul Chapman, 1999).

²⁸ Asia Theological Association, https://ataindia.org/wp_install/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/ATA-2021-Manual-for-Accreditation-A4.pdf. The ATA proposes six areas of core curricula: “Biblical Studies, Theology and Ethics, History of Christianity, Religion and Society, Evangelism and Missions, and Christian Ministry.” (ATA Manual for Accreditation, p. 4).

²⁹ Five integrated core curriculums by the Asia Theological Association are Biblical Studies, Theology and Ethics, History of Christianity, Religion and Society, Evangelism and Missions, and Christian Ministry.

Hidden Curriculum

The hidden curriculum encompasses unwritten, unofficial, and unintentional lessons imparted by the school. For instance, denominational norms, values, and beliefs—such as the worship practices specific to a particular denomination—may be implicitly conveyed.

Excluded Curriculum

The excluded curriculum, sometimes referred to as “extracurricular activities,” includes school-sponsored activities that extend beyond the explicit curriculum. Examples include sports, seminars, academic clubs, and other school-sponsored programs. This category also covers topics not explicitly addressed within the formal curriculum.

Proposed Model for Curriculum Design

Curriculum design for all formal post-secondary education, including public and private universities, colleges, technical training institutes, and vocational schools, is a dynamic field that integrates theoretical frameworks with practical applications to enhance student learning outcomes. This section addresses the question: What are the fundamental principles of effective and practical curriculum design?

There are at least ten fundamental principles to consider when articulating curriculum design for Christian higher education in theological institutions. These include Vision and Mission, Curriculum Development Committee, Major Objectives, Teachers’ Insights, Relevance, Learner-Centeredness, Flexibility and Adaptability, Assessment and Content Selection, Interdisciplinary Relationships, and Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement.

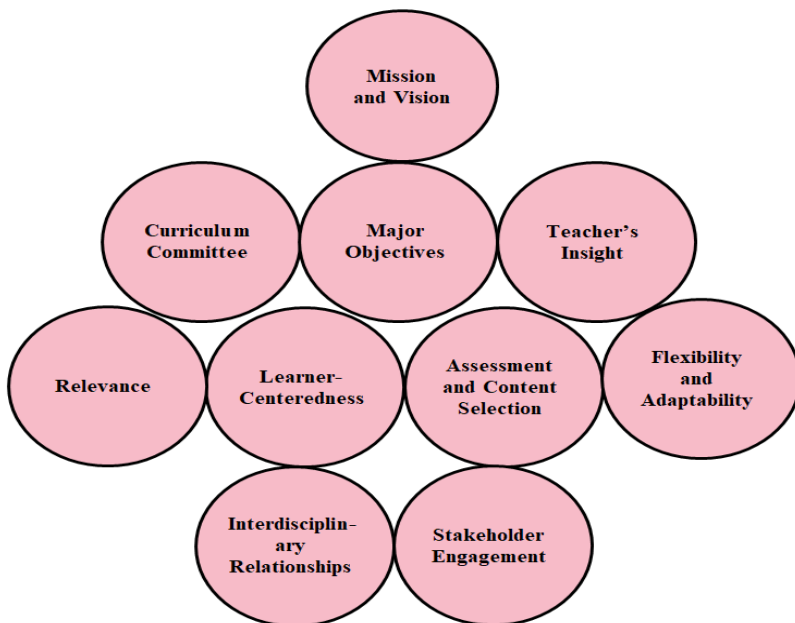


Figure 3: Proposed Model for Curriculum Design

1. Align with the Institution’s Vision and Mission

The curriculum must reflect the institution’s vision, mission, and philosophy. Alignment ensures that the curriculum fulfills the institution’s purpose and core values.

2. Establish a Curriculum Development Committee

A dedicated curriculum development committee plays a vital role in achieving an institution’s educational objectives by ensuring the curriculum is relevant, comprehensive, and aligned with the institution’s mission.

3. Define Major Objectives of Curriculum Design

Establishing clear objectives helps improve educational offerings, instructional practices, and student engagement.

4. Incorporate Teachers' Insights

Teachers play a critical role in curriculum design as they interpret and enact it in classrooms.³⁰ As Grant and Jay assert, “Teachers are designers.”³¹ Their expertise and specialization allow them to address gaps in higher theological education, contributing to the formulation of effective teaching content. They are course writers. Teachers can help formulate teaching particular content that might fill an important gap in higher theological education.

5. Relevance

Ensuring the curriculum aligns with societal needs, industry demands, and the evolving role of education. Regular reviews help keep the curriculum updated with industry trends, technological advancements, and societal needs. Incorporating feedback from employers, alumni, and academic experts ensures graduates are well-prepared for the workforce.

6. Learner-Centeredness

Placing students at the heart of the learning process, focusing on their engagement, needs, and contributions. The committee designs a curriculum that caters to diverse learning needs, fostering critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving.

7. Conduct Needs Assessment and Content Selection

The curriculum must address contemporary educational needs and reflect current societal and academic contexts.

8. Flexibility and Adaptability

Designing curricula that can evolve in response to new knowledge, technologies, and societal changes.

9. Promote Interdisciplinary Relationships

Fostering connections among various disciplines enhances the curriculum's cohesiveness and relevance. By involving faculty from various disciplines, the committee ensures the curriculum integrates diverse perspectives, promoting holistic education.

10. Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement

Including voices from academia, industry, and society in the design process. Ongoing stakeholder feedback enables regular updates to the curriculum, ensuring it remains relevant and effective over time.

By embedding these principles into curriculum design, higher education institutions can navigate the evolving landscape of knowledge production, ensuring student success and societal relevance. The active involvement of students and stakeholders transforms the curriculum into a living document, continually shaped by and for its participants.

³⁰ Richard Harris and Rosemary Reynolds, Exploring teachers' curriculum decision making: insights from history education, <https://eds-p-ebSCOhost-com.aaron.swbts.edu/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&sid=4a6c8103-d470-4d9b-b08a-f5c39fe66d59%40redis>, (Oxford Review of Education, 2018 VOL. 44, NO. 2, 139–155), p. 140.

³¹ Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, Understanding by Design, (Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development), p.13.

Role of the Library in Curriculum Design

The library plays a vital role in curriculum design by providing resources, expertise, and support to ensure that the curriculum is well-informed, inclusive, and aligned with the needs of students and educators. By acting as a hub of knowledge, collaboration, and innovation, libraries significantly enhance the quality and effectiveness of curriculum design.³²

The institutional library plays a significant role in curriculum development. For instance, a Master of Divinity program should ideally include 10,000 book titles in specialized areas of study, excluding book volumes. Teachers can contribute to the library's development by recommending textbooks and resources relevant to their areas of expertise. A well-equipped library, qualified faculty, and a robust curriculum are essential for accreditation.

Faculty Development and Assessment as Part of Curriculum Design

Faculty development is integral to curriculum quality, enhancing faculty engagement in teaching and writing while encouraging participation in curriculum development workshops. The key areas of faculty development include: understanding curriculum goals, pedagogical skills, content mastery, instructional design, inclusivity and equity. Faculty assessment provides feedback on teaching effectiveness and aligns instructional strategies with curriculum goals. It identifies areas where faculty might need support or development. The methods of faculty assessment include: student feedback, self-assessment, peer review, administrative review, and performance metrics such as analysing outcomes like student grades, retention rates, and standardized test scores.

Faculty Assessment Standards by the Asia Theological Association (ATA)

The ATA outlines specific requirements for faculty assessment and recruitment, including:

1. Faculty members must have relevant experience to prepare students in areas such as discipleship, mentoring, character formation, and ministry development.
2. Faculty members must possess appropriate ministerial experience.
3. Faculty members must demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the Bible and theology.
4. Faculty members must hold a degree higher than the one they are teaching, with credentials from properly accredited institutions and relevant to the courses they teach.³³

Faculty Development and Assessment Program

According to the ATA Manual for Accreditation, faculty members are expected to engage regularly in professional development activities suitable for their roles. Institutions are encouraged to provide transparent opportunities for faculty development, including:

- 1 Faculty development plans.
- 2 Research leaves for ongoing contributions to their field of study.
- 3 Allocated study time to stay updated in teaching fields, educational development, and adult learning theories and methodologies.

³² David Parker, Learning Belongs in the Library — Exploring the Role of the Library in Curriculum Design and Course Technology Support Centered on Affordability, Engagement, and OER (31 January 2022) from <https://www.charleston-hub.com/2022/01/learning-belongs-in-the-library-exploring-the-role-of-the-library-in-curriculum-design-and-course-technology-support-centered-on-affordability-engagement-and-oer/>.

³³ ATA 2021 Manual for Accreditation, <https://www.ataasia.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/ATA-2021-Manual-for-Accreditation.pdf> pp. 44-45.

Participation in ICETE³⁴ Academy courses, as well as ATA and ICETE assemblies and consultations, are recognized as significant components of faculty professional development.³⁵

Faculty Self-Evaluation Assessment by Student

FACULTY SELF-EVALUATION SHEET FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Name of the Professor.....

Teaching Subject.....

Degree Program.....

This self-evaluation sheet has been prepared to be given to the students of Asia Evangelical College & Seminary to evaluate their academic excellence in teaching various courses undertaken. For your response to the following, you may kindly put a tick in the box. We assure you that your response will be kept strictly confidential and used only for official purposes. If the student would like to add more reflective comments you are requested to do so. You may kindly fill in the following column:

Clarity of teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1. Style	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
2. Communication	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
3. Syllabi preparation	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
4. Punctuality	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
5. Interaction	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
6.							
7.							
8.							

NB: Please note that the above-given columns are abbreviated as follows:

Poor	Average	Above Average	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Outstanding
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7

A Model Curriculum for the Master of Divinity³⁶

This model curriculum includes areas of study such as Biblical Languages; Biblical Theology; Biblical Counseling; Theology and Ethics; Christian Leadership; Church Planting; Church History; Evangelism; Missions; New Testament; Old Testament; Pastoral Ministry; Philosophy of Religion; Christian Education; Church Music and Worship; and Discipleship and Spiritual Formation.

³⁴ The ICETE stands for the International Council for Evangelical Theological Education.

³⁵ATA 2021 Manual for Accreditation, <https://www.ataasia.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/ATA-2021-Manual-for-Accreditation.pdf>, p. 46.

³⁶ The theological institution has the freedom to structure its curriculum in alignment with the model areas of study outlined in this section.

Degree Program: M.Div.

Duration of Study: 3 Years

Core Curriculum: 30

Credit Hours for Core Subjects: 90

Elective Subjects: 12

Credit Hours for Elective: 22

Total Credit Hours: 112

The Three-Year M.Div. program requires a total of 112 credit hours, which includes 90 credit hours for 30 core subjects and 22 credit hours for 12 elective subjects. The Two-Year M.Div. program requires a total of 76 credit hours, consisting of 60 credit hours for 20 core subjects and 16 credit hours for 8 elective subjects.

All elective courses are marked with an asterisk (*). Students are required to take elective courses as part of their academic assessment to fulfill the requirements for graduation.

CONCLUSION

A well-structured curriculum plays a pivotal role in the success of Christian higher education institutions, benefiting teachers, students, and the institution as a whole. The curriculum serves as the heart of the institution, enabling it to respond effectively to the challenges of a dynamic and ever-changing world. Institutions must create opportunities for faculty to participate in curriculum design workshops, course development initiatives, and other professional development programs. These efforts ensure consistency in the learning experience and foster innovation. Moreover, the curriculum must align with the mission and vision of the institution, facilitating the effective fulfilment of the purpose of Christian higher education. The criteria examined in this study have proven to be both relevant and effective for curriculum design. Notably, the three foundational pillars of accreditation in theological education—library resources, curriculum quality, and faculty excellence—remain essential for maintaining high standards in Christian higher education.

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