AAMC CURRICULUMINVENTORY

AAMC CI Newsletter, October 7, 2020
CI Portal closes Oct 23, CI Office Hours, and Building a Curriculum Inventory Chapter 4

CI Portal closes for uploads October 23, 2020 & CI Office Hours

The CI Portal is open for CI data submissions now through Friday, October 23. If you need assistance in uploading your data, and prefer to receive live support, please sign up for a 1:1 CI Office Hours session. Once you register for your choice of date and time slot, you will receive a confirmation message. We will then share an Outlook invitation with web-conference call information. As always, please feel free to reach out to ci@aamc.org with any questions or concerns.

Building a Curriculum Inventory (CI) – Determining an organizational strategy for your CI

We have reached the fourth chapter of this 12-month workbook, meaning we are a quarter of the way through this journey! So far we have reviewed getting started with your CI in chapter 1, choosing a technical platform in chapter 2, and program-level learning objectives in chapter 3. Now it is time to determine an organizational strategy for your curricular data, and how you represent that strategy in your CI. This is critical because how you organize your CI data now will impact your future data reports, which ensures the reports both are useful and high quality. This chapter helps you understand the key decisions you need to make. Let's get started!

**Chapter 4: Determining an organizational strategy for your CI**

Chapter 4 Highlights
1. Curriculum visual schematics
2. CI organizing principles to create a list of courses
3. How data will display in your Verification and Accreditation Support Reports

Curriculum visual schematics

Typically, schools have a visual schematic to represent their curriculum to students, applicants, and the public. A listing of school curriculum schematics is available on our Resources to Use Your CI Effectively webpage, and a national report regarding curriculum schematics is available on the CI Portal. These resources may help you design a visual schematic to represent your curriculum if you do not already have one or need to revise your current schematic. If your school has a visual curriculum schematic you do not see listed on our website, please let us know at ci@aamc.org.

The CI standards are flexible, so outlining your visual schematic in detail will help drive how you organize your content.
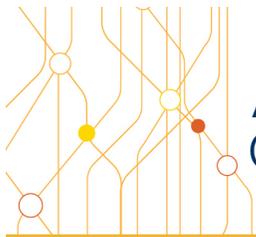
- **Task 1:** Design your curriculum's visual schematic and confirm it is accurately listed on the CI website.

Organizing principles to create a list of courses

There are a variety of approaches that schools use to organize their curriculum – schools organize curriculum content by year (e.g., year 1, year 2, etc.), by phase (e.g., phase 1, phase 2), with courses or blocks, longitudinal threads, and more. In the AAMC CI, years or phases are organized in a field called "academic level."

- **Task 2:** Determine the number of academic levels you need to accurately represent your curriculum, and how each should be labeled (e.g., Academic Level 1 = Year 1).

Once you determine how you would like your CI organized (e.g., academic level 1 = year 1, academic level 2 = year 2, etc.), next you can decide how many and which courses, clerkships, modules, blocks, or threads to "nest" underneath each academic level. The goal is to minimally include all required curriculum content (e.g., required courses which all graduating students take). You also may decide to document optional courses, special tracks, or extracurricular activities, etc.

When determining which courses, modules, and threads to include in your CI, think about your typical student, and try to replicate in your CI the experience that most of your students will have. In your CI, you can have required courses with both required and optional events in them, and optional courses with both required and optional events in them.

When deciding which content to put in your CI, it may be a matter of input and output. Ideally all your school's curriculum would be documented in your CI, but that may not be feasible. For example, if your school offers over 1,000 electives, it may not be realistic to document each course to its fullest extent in your CI. If not, perhaps you could prioritize the top 25 electives that have higher enrollment among your students. Ultimately, the goals of your CI which you drafted in the Getting Started chapter, should drive the choices you make in terms of which elements of the curriculum to document.

- **Task 3:** Determine how many and which courses, clerkships, modules, blocks, or threads need to be within each of your academic levels. These should accurately and completely represent the curriculum experience of a typical, hypothetical student.

How data will display in your school's Verification and Accreditation Support Reports

The Verification Report and the Accreditation Support Report are created for each school once CI data is successfully shared with AAMC. These reports present your school's data back to you in tables with explanations of what data populates each table. We recommend viewing a sample of each of these
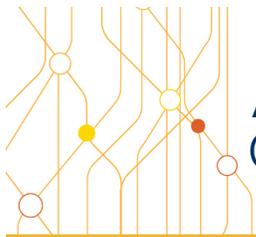
reports on the [Resources to Use Your CI Effectively](#) webpage to see how organized content will display in your reports.

For example, the last table in the Verification Report will show you content course by course, or module by module. Therefore, if you would like a given course, module, or piece of your curriculum to have a separate and distinct section in the Verification Report, perhaps to support curriculum evaluation or to support your accreditation efforts, it will be helpful to organize it separately in your CI.

- **Task 4**: Review the sample Verification and Accreditation Support Reports.

In the CI standards, the concept "sequence block" is used to document courses, clerkships, modules, and any other organizational approaches to curriculum content.

One of the features of the CI standards is the concept of "nested sequence blocks." Nested sequence blocks allow you to represent a hierarchy in your CI. For example, perhaps your curriculum has a sequence block for "diagnostic and therapeutic procedures,", and under that, separate sequence blocks (e.g., for "surgery," "OBGYN," etc. The use of nested sequence blocks is not required in your CI, but it can be a useful tool in accurately representing the organizational structure of your curriculum.

- **Task 5**: Determine whether and how nested sequence blocks may help you to accurately represent hierarchy of curriculum data organization in your CI.

Keep in mind that for each course, module, theme, thread, etc. which you include now in your list for the CI, there will be follow up documentation. This will include data such as event dates and times, instructional and assessment methods, learning objectives, etc.

You may find that there is curriculum (courses, modules, etc.) on your list for which the details are not centrally located (e.g., the learning objectives are on the faculty's PowerPoint slides, and event dates/times are on a PDF syllabus, etc.), and thus it may be helpful to plan some extra time for gathering this kind of data across sources.

- **Task 6**: Begin to think ahead as to where the follow up information you will need for each course/module in your CI may be. You will need to collect it into a centralized location.

Chapter 4 key questions

1. Do we have a visual schematic for our curriculum? Is it up to date, and reflective of what we want our CI's structure to look like?
2. What is our organizational approach for our CI? How many academic levels will we have, and what will we call them?
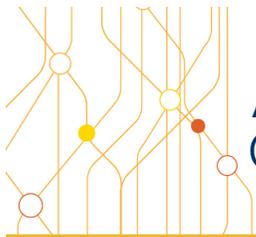
3. Based on our CI goals identified in Chapter 1, what is our list of courses, clerkships, modules, and threads we want to include in our CI, and how will these be organized within our academic levels?

4. After reviewing the AAMC CI Verification and Accreditation Support Reports, what organizational approach will we take to make sure each table populates with data we can use?

As questions arise, please feel free to reach out to ci@aamc.org.

Onward!

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