

# Bridging Gaps in Course Design: A Collaborative Blueprint for Student-Centered Consistency

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## Description

Explore how one health-science specific institution turned the challenge of an LMS transition into an opportunity to build a collaborative, student-centered course design blueprint. Learn how faculty and instructional designers created a scalable model for consistent, high-quality course experiences for students. The college **strategic plan** post-2020 included:

1. Maintain quality course design
2. Improvement and consistency in use of the new LMS

## Background

The COVID-19 pandemic and Emergency Remote Instruction resulted in faculty requesting the investigation of a new LMS solution. After a search, the college chose Brightspace by D2L. In the first year of implementation, students and faculty were surveyed several times about their satisfaction with the new LMS. Responses indicated that there existed an inconsistency in course design which created confusion and difficulty in navigation. In response, the college partnered with an instructional design consultant to create a course blueprint that could be applied across all courses.

## Presentation Learning Objectives

1. Describe at least three strategies for collaborating with faculty to develop consistent, student-centered course designs.
2. Interpret survey or feedback data to evaluate how course design affects student engagement and satisfaction across modalities.
3. Evaluate how a course blueprint can be adapted to address design challenges specific to various course type and modality.

## Assessment

SEH College follows the Nichols Model of assessment. This method was modified and utilized throughout the blueprint creation process.

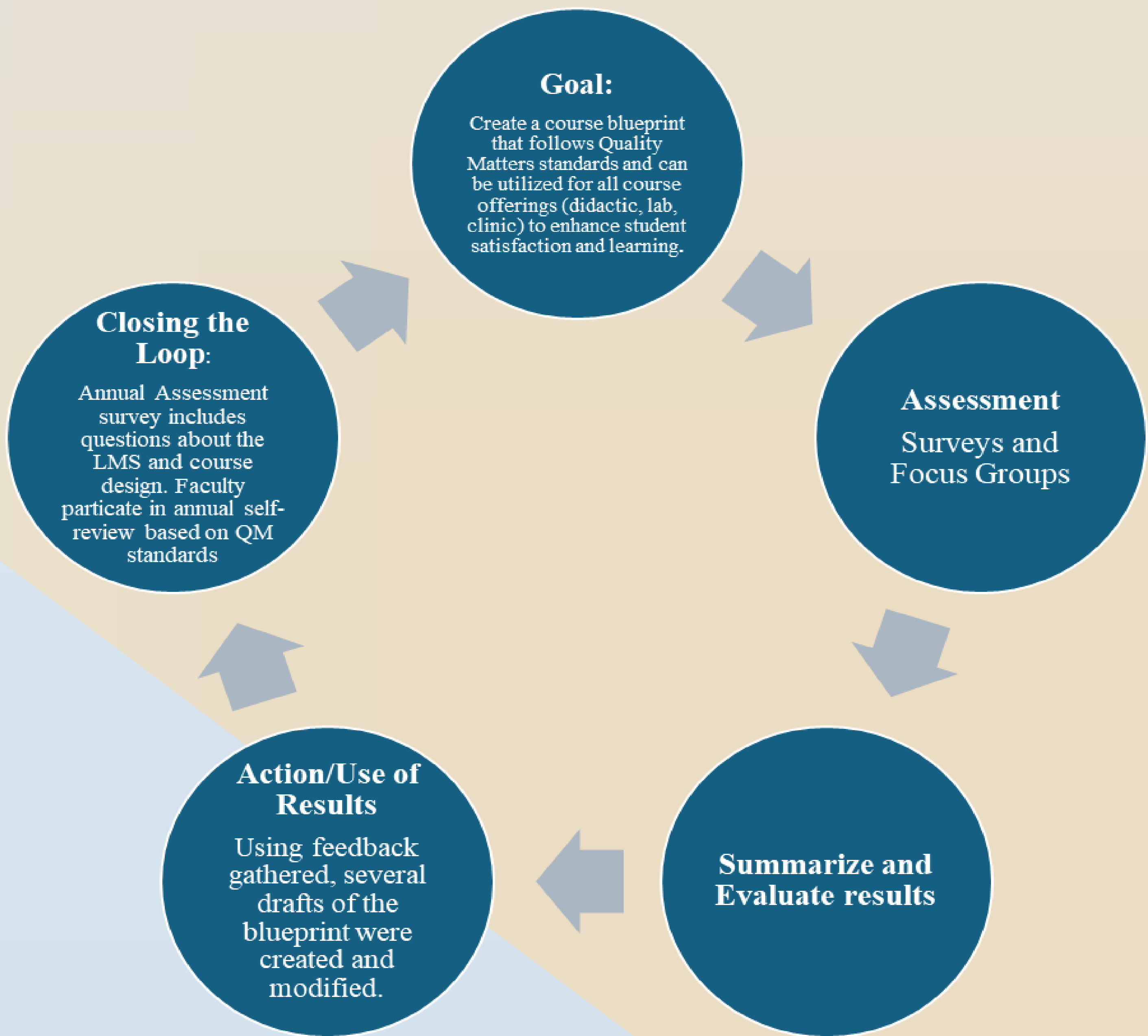
Surveys and focus groups were used throughout the blueprint creation process to obtain and act on feedback from both faculty and students.

Several drafts were introduced, reviewed, and revised before the final blueprint was approved.

## Timeline

### SEH College LMS Course Blueprint timeline

SPRING 2020	COVID-19 PANDEMIC	Students and faculty were flung headfirst into online learning. Many of our faculty had no experience with virtual education. Students did not choose online coursework. We did the best we could with what we had!
FALL 2020	ANNUAL STUDENT AND FACULTY SURVEY	Annual student/faculty assessment results spurred the interest in a new LMS. Search initiated.
SPRING 2021	NEW LMS PURCHASED (BRIGHTSPACE BY D2L)	School began transition to the new LMS with a soft launch in Summer 2021. Full launch with Fall 2021 term. Virtual orientation sessions provided by D2L throughout summer and fall.
FALL 2021	FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW LMS	Faculty had full autonomy in course design, with material (as much as possible) imported as packages from the previous LMS.
SPRING 2022	ANNUAL STUDENT AND FACULTY SURVEY	Annual student/faculty assessment results indicated dissatisfaction with the new LMS. The majority of complaints revolved around course navigation and lack of consistency of materials and assessments.
MARCH 2022	COLLEGE ADMINISTRATION INITIATED COURSE BLUEPRINT PROCESS	As result of the student and faculty survey results, administration initiated pursuit of a course blueprint/template for use in all course shells. The college contracted with D2L for the development of a course blueprint that could be used in all courses. The Instructional Designer assigned to the project was educated in Quality Matters standards.
SUMMER 2022	SURVEYS/FOCUS GROUPS INITIATED WORK WITH D2L INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNER INITIATED	Students and faculty surveyed about course design preferences. Student leaders (Student Council officers and Honor Society members) and faculty members created focus groups to review drafts of the course blueprint. This continued throughout Fall 2022.
FALL 2022	CONTINUED FOCUS GROUPS AND REVIEWS AS BLUEPRINT DEVELOPED	Throughout the fall, student leaders and faculty had regular focus group meetings and surveys as drafts of the blueprint were developed, reviewed, and changed. The goal was to create a course format that could be used for didactic, lab, and clinical courses, while following Quality Matters standards.
SPRING 2023	COURSE BLUEPRINT APPLIED TO ALL COURSES	Beginning in January 2023, all courses offered by Southeast HEALTH College were formatted with the blueprint developed over the past year. Changes/suggestions from faculty and students were integrated with Quality Matters standards to create a course blueprint that functioned for all course types. This provided consistency across all courses offered by the college, and promoted the achievement of Quality Matters standards throughout our courses.



## Ongoing Assessment

In the academic year 2024-25, the college Distance Education committee and QMC initiated a yearly QM based course *self-review* by each faculty member. The first year began with a self-review for Quality Matters Standard one. This multi-year project will continue through each standard, to ensure that all courses meet QM standards. Faculty are provided with a modified rubric, based on the QM 7<sup>th</sup> edition Higher Education rubric, which they use to evaluate each course they teach (both Fall and Spring terms). These rubrics are collected and evaluated over the summer. Results are presented at the annual Professional Development session prior to start of the fall term.