

Boise State University

Instructional & Performance Technology (IPT) Department

IPT537 – Instructional Design (4 credits)

This is a synopsis of the course syllabus intended to provide an overview of the course. Please note that details of the course may change from semester to semester and that the syllabus used during a given semester takes precedence over this summary.

General course description

This course is about instructional design (ID), which has been described as “a process for determining what to teach and how to teach it” (Dick, 1995, p.13). In many ways, an instructional designer is like an engineer (Smith & Ragan, 1999, p. 2). Both plan their work based upon scientific principles – the engineer on the laws of physics, and the instructional designer on basic principles of instruction and learning. Both work to design solutions that are functional, efficient, and attractive or appealing to the end-user. Both have established problem-solving procedures that they use to guide their design decisions. Both work to meet the needs of their clients and other stakeholders.

The course has two purposes: (1) to help you learn some of these “engineering” principles and procedures so you can design functional and appealing instructional solutions and (2) to introduce you to some of the current issues and controversies in the field. The course is a beginning point rather than an end point. ID covers a lot of territory and it would be easy to spend an entire semester on each part of the ID process. In fact, there are courses in the curriculum that do just that – such as IPT529 (Needs assessment), IPT538 (Instructional Strategies), and IPT530 (Evaluation Methodology).

Textbook / readings

- Carliner, S. (2003). *Training design basics*. Alexandria, VA: ASTD.
- A set of readings from professional books and journals
- A set of project handouts

Course goals

As a result of this course, you should be able to:

1. “Qualify” a project – make a data-driven determination that a particular situation is a reasonable candidate for a training program.
2. Complete a learner analysis that includes data-driven conclusions about the target audience and instructional implications directly related to those conclusions.
3. Develop a task analysis that accurately and completely describes exemplary performance of important job tasks.
4. Write a set of objectives using Mager’s 3-part method.
5. Create an authentic performance assessment.
6. Use Merrill’s “first principles of instruction” to develop an instructional plan that is clear, coherent, and “user-friendly.”
7. Create an initial draft of instructional materials that matches the instructional plan.
8. Conduct a formative evaluation that includes data-driven recommendations for revision of the instructional materials.
9. Explain the what, why, and how of each of these pieces of the ID process
10. Maintain a consistent thread of alignment connecting all of these pieces of the ID process while working on a specific project
11. Correctly use professional ID vocabulary
12. Communicate effectively in written reports and online discussions
13. Contribute to the effective operation of a project team

Course assignments

Instructional design project (team assignment)

This assignment relates to course goals 1 through 13. The ID project asks you to work as a member of a team to develop a short training program on a topic that your team chooses. The project is divided into a set of tasks that are commonly completed as part of an ID project.

1. Project description
2. Performance, cause, and organizational analysis
3. Learner analysis
4. Task analysis
5. Objectives
6. Performance assessment
7. Instructional plan
8. Instructional materials
9. Formative evaluation

Participation in class and team discussions (individual assignment)

This assignment relates to course goals 9 through 13. You'll earn points based on a combination of the quality, quantity, and timeliness of your participation.

Quality – The expectation is that you'll contribute in substantive ways.

Quantity – The expectation is that you'll make multiple contributions.

Timeliness – The expectation is that you'll participate throughout each discussion.

Final exam OR evidence-based practice papers (individual assignment)

Final exam – This assignment relates to course goals 1 through 8, and 12. The exam is designed to assess your mastery of course content. This is an open-book, open-notes, individual assignment.

Evidence based practice papers – This assignment relates to course goals 6, 9, 11, and 12. The task is to (1) find and read 4 published articles related to elements of the instructional plan and (2) write a synopsis (roughly 500 to 1000 words in length) for each article.

Time required

A general rule of thumb is that you should expect to invest approximately 45 hours per credit during a semester. IPT537 is a 4-credit course taught during a 15 week semester. This means that you should expect to invest approximately 180 hours (45 x 4) on the course during the semester. This translates to approximately 12 hours per week (180 ÷ 15 weeks). Remember that this is an approximation. You might spend more or less time on the course depending on your relevant work experience and your familiarity with the content. In addition, the primary assignment in this course is a team project which will require your efforts to maintain effective communication and collaboration within the team. You might spend more or less time on the course depending on your experience with this kind of virtual team communication and collaboration.