

Developing Culinary Lab Curriculum: Building Skills and Comprehension
Through One Ingredient

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Abstract

When developing a laboratory curriculum, as with any educational process, it is important to think of the learning outcomes first. What skills should my students be able to perform and at what level? It is also imperative that the instructor knows and understands the audience (McCrary & Rice, 2008): have the students ever cooked? Do they possess knowledge of culinary vocabulary? Are they serious culinary students or are they taking the class to fulfill an elective? Once these questions have been answered, developing a culinary lab that is organized and learning outcomes focused, is much easier. Designing curriculum centered on one ingredient provides an opportunity to develop skills while exploring the full potential of a food. It is a lab that is skill oriented rather than recipe centered.

Culinary labs are opportunities to build conceptual knowledge and develop critical thinking skills through peer interaction (McCrary & Rice, 2008). Bloom identified three learning areas: the cognitive, affective and psychomotor. Bloom's taxonomy includes knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation (1956). According to Nursing Education Perspectives 2008, laboratories should be developed to connect theory with practice (2008). The culinary lab naturally follows the learning cycle: awareness, exploration, inquiry and action. As culinary instructors, we lecture as a base of information, and then we take our students through exercises designed to apply and synthesize

information. At the end of the laboratory, the instructor and the students analyze, evaluate and reflect on the process. Laboratories are a time consuming process but well worth the effort. Students will retain more information and will eventually learn how to do their own learning (Schmidt, 2008). The hands-on environment is much more effective for the learning process than lecture alone (McCrary & Rice, 2008). Active learning enhances a deeper knowledge, increases motivation and problem solving skills (Schmidt, 2008).

The session leader will engage participants at the FENI summit to inquire about curriculum design and the utilization of one ingredient to develop many skills (see appendix A). Participants will gain knowledge about an active learning environment and this enhances student learning outcomes.

References

Bloom, Benjamin S. (1956). *Education Objective Handbook 1: Cognitive Domain*. New York, USA: David Mc Kay Co., Inc.

McCrary, N. Rice, E. (2008). Development and Implementation of a lab course for introductory astronomy. *Astronomy Education Review*, 7 (1), 13-22.

Faculty matters. (2008). *Nursing Education Perspectives*, 29 (4), 196-196.

Schmidt, L. (2008). How we don't learn. *Leadership*, 38 (2), 10-14.

Appendix A

The poster will be comprised of an egg lab. Students will separate eggs, simmer eggs, make egg salad, French, Swiss and Italian meringue, sauce Anglaise and omelets. Skills gained by the students will be listed. A rubric for omelets will be provided.