

Tips for Writing Your CTI Curriculum Unit First Draft (developed by CTI Fellows Lindsey Elkins & Connie Wood)

Please review the CU Guidelines in your Fellows Handbook on pp. 25-31.

1. The unit should relate to the seminar topic, but it should also be appropriate and relevant for the subject and students you teach. This should be your original work, developed through your seminar experience.
2. The first draft should cover the unit objectives and strategies, but not necessarily detailed activities.
3. It should be 7-8 pages single-spaced.
4. It should be written in paragraphs, not in outline form or as a list.
5. “Objectives” in CTI/Yale-speak are not like objectives in teacher-speak. The objectives should cover what you want the unit to accomplish and why it is important. This is where you clearly define the purpose of the unit and what you hope to accomplish by the end of the unit. This section should address district/Common Core standards, describe your class/course and the students the unit is designed for, and tell how long the unit will last. This section should be near the beginning of the unit so teachers will know if the unit is appropriate for their classes.
6. Differentiating between strategies and activities is always a little tricky. For example: A strategy for your unit may be Socratic seminar, but the activity would describe specific focus questions for the seminar as well as any other elements, such as a written reflection or analysis the students will complete after the seminar. Strategies would be WAYS to teach based on research, and activities would be how you IMPLEMENT those strategies to meet your unit objectives. One caveat about strategies: if the strategy is something that most teachers are familiar with, you do not need to discuss it at length. For the example given (Socratic seminar), the strategy itself could be discussed for a couple of sentences, maybe detailing how to facilitate the seminar in small versus large classes. If this seems difficult to parcel out in two sections, some people discuss both in the same section. Here are examples showing two different ways of doing this that Lindsey has used:
 - Example with separate sections for strategies and activities (begins on page 5):
http://charlotteteachers.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/10.01.05_copy.pdf
 - Example where strategies and activities are discussed in the same sections (begins on page 7):
<http://charlotteteachers.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/11.04.05.pdf>
7. You do not need to turn in a bibliography yet—BUT, you should be keeping track of where you get your information and how you’re utilizing each source over the course of the unit.
8. If you use copyrighted work beyond “fair use” standards, you MUST get written permission (Handbook p. 27).
9. Go to the CTI website and look at other units to consider how you might want to organize your unit. Discuss with your Seminar Coordinator to confirm the structure and formatting meet current CTI requirements.
10. Your title should be clear and specific.
11. Remember your final audience—teachers—and write as though you are speaking to them about your unit. What do you need to include so that another teacher can successfully teach your unit?

Looking forward: How you organize your unit is ultimately up to you, but here is a guide for your final submitted unit:

- Introduction/Rationale (your reason for creating the unit, etc.) = 1-2 pages
- Objectives (paraphrase District Standards and your own objectives for the unit) = 1 page
- Background (description of students, school, challenges, etc. – *Be objective and tactful!*) = 1 page
- Content Background (relevant research, theory, etc. gleaned from your seminar work) = 6-8 pages
- Strategies and Activities (what will go on in the classroom—putting theory/research into practice) = 6-8 pages

Beyond those sections, include any worksheets you may have as appendices, along with the required appendix (Implementing District Teaching Standards), classroom materials list, annotated resources for students list, and annotated bibliography.