

Figure 1.1 Operations Necessary for Systematic Course Preparation

Analyzing:

1. the conditions of the teaching situation...Chapter 1
2. the characteristics of the students...Chapter 1
3. the course content...Chapter 1

Planning:

4. the course objectives...Chapter 2
5. evaluation of the students...Chapter 3
6. the choice of teaching methods...Chapter 4
7. the choice of teaching materials...Chapter 5
8. the course outline...Chapter 6
9. the course syllabus...Chapter 6
10. the lesson plan...Chapter 6

Conducting:

11. the course according to preparation
 - using lectures...Chapter 7
 - using group work...Chapter 8

Evaluating:

12. the course at midterm...Chapter 9
13. the course at the end of the term...Chapter 9

In Chapter 6, I enter into *detailed planning of different learning activities*, using the course syllabus, the course outline, and the lesson plan.

In Chapter 7, I consider the most widespread teaching method, *the lecture*. I first suggest a series of useful operations to prepare the explanations for a presentation. I then present a general model for lectures. (Throughout this book, I use the terms "explanation" and "explaining" as defined and used by George Brown in *Lecturing and Explaining* (p. 7): "Put simply, explaining is giving understanding to someone else.")

In Chapter 8, I describe *how to help students work better in groups*. I first explain how to divide the energy in a good work group and how to hold effective meetings. I then suggest a strategy for training students to work in groups, using a number of exercises throughout the term.

In Chapter 9, I propose two means of *formatively evaluating your teaching*, the first around midterm and the second at the end of the term.

INTRODUCTION

The procedure I propose for preparing a new course covers nine chapters, which describe chronological processes. This linear procedure is handy, even if it does not totally do justice to the nature of the task of designing and preparing a new course. Course preparation is actually a *systemic procedure* in which we must often think simultaneously of the interaction of several aspects.

The procedure I propose consists of a certain number of operations, as presented in Figure I.1 (on the following page). The text generally follows the chronology of these operations, although we regroup some of them.

In Chapter 1, I recommend that you clearly examine the conditions of the teaching situation that you have inherited. You must analyze the events that have led to creation of the course, compare the scope of the work to be accomplished with the resources and time at your disposal, identify the characteristics of your students, and adapt the course content to their needs.

In Chapter 2, I recommend that you *formulate your course objectives*. I attempt to simplify and demystify the formulation of objectives, and I stress their fundamental role in all subsequent operations. This chapter also covers the different levels of objectives.

In Chapter 3, I enter into *planning how to evaluate learning*. I first examine the two roles that evaluation may play: summative and formative. I then describe several evaluation instruments and provide criteria for choosing them. Finally, I give practical advice on developing, administering, and correcting exams.

In Chapter 4, I describe, almost exhaustively, the *teaching methods* that allow you to help your students attain the course objectives. Here again, I provide some selection criteria.

In Chapter 5, I list *teaching materials* and analyze the relative pedagogical impact of these materials. I also give practical advice on correctly using each type of material.