Backward Design Stages as Questions

This sheet outlines the major movements of Backward Design as questions.

By the end of the course or program, what should students know and be able to do?
- To answer this question, we write student learning goals.
- [Stage 1, Understanding by Design]
- [Step 2, Integrated Course Design]

How will students demonstrate they have attained the desired learning?
- To answer this question, we identify what student work, such as course assignments or capstone projects, we will examine as evidence of their learning.
- [Stage 2, Understanding by Design]
- [Step 3, Integrated Course Design]

What courses and learning activities will we design to help the students attain the desired learning?
- To answer this question, we design the program curriculum structure, courses, and co-curricular activities. It can be helpful to create a curriculum map that shows the alignment of student learning outcomes and the learning activities.
- [Stage 3, Understanding by Design]
- [Steps 4-12, Integrated Course Design]

Were the courses and learning activities effective in helping students attain the desired learning, and if not, what might we do to help students improve?
- Answering this question is closing the assessment loop; we look at student work, note areas for improvement, and make any necessary adjustments to our curriculum, courses, or learning activities.
- [Assessment 101, James Meek]
- [Assessment Clear and Simple, Chapter 1, Barbara Walvoord]