

Articulating Learning Goals for Your Course of Program

Teaching Matters and Assessment Center (TMAC), November 4, 2013

I. Learning Goals vs. Learning Outcomes

Goals (General) and Outcomes are Effectively Synonymous
Knowledge, Skills, Attributes

II. Outcomes and Assessment

Measurable, Manageable, Meaningful
Directed toward Transparency and Transferability
Grounded in Models of Continuous Improvement

III. Getting Started on Learning Outcomes

Course vs. Curriculum
Developmental vs. Mastery Outcomes

IV. Let's "Youtube" + Exercise

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mOVj00O8jil>

IV. Practical Advice (from UC Berkeley)

- Don't get trapped into thinking that you will only be able to teach to the goals. Your learning goals point out the high points and learners always need to know all of the supporting content, theory, data, different points of view, and relevant facts that support the high points.
- Keep the number of learning goals - manageable and realistic. The first time you go through this exercise opt for a shorter list knowing that you can edit it as needed. Five or six goals might be a good starting point.
- Write goal statements that begin with action verbs. By using verbs that specify action, the outcome is more likely to be measurable. Actions help identify what needs to be assessed (did this student develop a plan, facilitate a process, establish a relationship, present a solution?) (See list of action verbs on the next page).
- Use language that is discipline-specific and appropriate to your field.
- Think about goals that are valuable to you and your students. Consider how discipline specific goals map to broader skills attainment (e.g., critical thinking, analytical reasoning and written/oral communication).
- Think about your teaching experience. What evidence tells you that students have met your expectations? How would you know that they are getting it? In other words, learning goals should be measurable; you will need evidence that the goal was or was not achieved.

(<http://teaching.berkeley.edu/what-are-learning-goals#sthash.vFTKGLTc.dpuf>)

V. Resources on Learning Outcomes

National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA)

<http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/TFComponentSLOS.htm>

Design and Teach a Course: Learning Objectives, Carnegie Mellon University
<http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/designteach/design/learningobjectives.html>

What are Learning Objectives?, University of Oregon
<http://tep.uoregon.edu/resources/assessment/learningobjectives.html>

What are Learning Goals?, UC Berkeley
<http://teaching.berkeley.edu/what-are-learning-goals>

Writing Student Learning Outcomes, Texas A & M
http://assessment.tamu.edu/resources/writing_student_learning_outcomes.html

How To Write Program Outcomes/Objectives, University of Connecticut
<http://assessment.uconn.edu/docs/HowToWriteObjectivesOutcomes.pdf>

Tips for Writing Learning Outcomes, IUPUI
<http://ctl.iupui.edu/Resources/Planning-the-Learning-Experience/Writing-Student-Learning-Outcomes>

Developing Learning Outcomes, Brigham Young University
<http://ctl.byu.edu/collections/developing-learning-outcomes>

Leading Questions for Developing Learning Goals, Brigham Young University
http://ctl.byu.edu/sites/default/files/leading_questions_for_learning_outcomes_0.pdf

Identifying Course Goals and Learning Objectives

As faculty members, we all have broad goals that we set out to accomplish in our courses. Often, these capture important domains within our fields and disciplines. Learning objectives are concrete actions of what a student should be able to do upon successful completion of the course. These can include changes in knowledge and competency areas, as well as attitudes and values.

1. Tips for Writing Learning Objectives:

- Be as specific as possible

- Be sure the outcomes are stated in terms of what the students will “know” or be able to do – this makes measuring them much easier to both understand and assess

- Work for clarity in language – remember that your audience are your students

2. Example Language for Learning Objectives:

- Students will demonstrate knowledge of basic information about ...

- Students will know the major ideas of ..., and be able to discuss their interrelationships.

- Students will be able to analyze information, and make judgments about the validity of that information.

- Students will understand the approaches and underlying values of ...

- Students will be able to communicate their knowledge about this subject orally and in writing, to a variety of audiences.

- Students will be able to apply the course information and skills to real world situations.

- Students will have a greater appreciation for and interest in ...

from George Mason University

<http://ctfe.gmu.edu/professional-development/resources-for-new-faculty/getting-started>

III. Outcomes

Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence, Carnegie Mellon University

<http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/resources/Teaching/CourseDesign/Objectives/BloomsTaxonomyVerbs.pdf>

Outcomes (Specific) vs. Goals (General) -- both measure knowledge, skills and attributes
what students are able to:

- Know (cognitive)
- D

-- limit yourself to 3-6 outcomes. Focus on the most important goals of your course/program.
In the end, you have to measure those outcomes

Recommendations:

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limit yourself to 3-6 outcomes. Focus on the most important goals of your
course/program. In the end, you have to measure all of them!

What do we assess?

Workshop on learning goals/outcomes