

Writing Learning Outcomes:

Best Practices

Presentation Outcomes

- Give examples of reasons to assess
- Recognize the terminology at WCC
- Write measurable course outcomes

Why assess?

- Shows evidence of how well our students learn.
- Uses evidence for continuous improvement.

Simply put, it helps you...

- Know what you are doing.
- Know why you are doing it.
- Know what students are learning as a result.
- Make changes in the curriculum based on that information.

Terminology

Use the language that already exists on campus - - but know what those words mean.

At Waubensee: Outcomes are written to measure student learning.

HLC Website:

- **Goals (objectives)** and **outcomes** are used inconsistently by member institutions in the context of assessment of student learning, to the extent that one institution's **goal** may be another's **outcome** and vice versa. When they use either term, the Criteria indicate through context whether the term refers to the learning intended or to how much students actually learn.

Goals/Objectives:

- Describe the goals and intentions of the professor teaching the class.
- Focus on the important content and skills within the classroom.
- Purpose and goals of the course.
- Describe what faculty will do.

What are learning outcomes?

- Formal statements that articulate:
 - **What** students are able to do after instruction
 - **Why** students need to do this

Some benefits of learning outcomes:

- Assists with:
- Developing instructional strategy
- Selecting instructional materials
- Constructing tests and other instruments for assessing and evaluating
- Improving curriculum.

What do you want the student to be able to do?

This question asks you to develop the outcome.

For Example:

Students will evaluate reference books appropriate to the topic in order to locate the best background information and statistics.

Characteristics of Good Learning Outcomes

- Measurable/Assessable
- Clear to the student & instructor
- Integrated, developmental, transferable
- Use discipline-specific competencies/standards
- “In order to” gets to the uniqueness and real world application of the learning
- Use a variety of Bloom’s Taxonomy levels
- Don’t Use Understand
- Don’t Demonstrate Knowledge (verbs will be more descriptive: explain, list, report, show, write)

Student Learning Outcomes –

Best Practice

Format:

Students should be able to
<action verb> <something>

Student Learning Outcomes

Opportunity for Improvement

This is more than one outcome. You will need to assess all outcomes listed.

Format:

Students should be able to <action verb> <action verb> <action verb>
<something><something>And <something else>

Student Learning Outcomes



If we really want to include multiple information (Which is helpful and descriptive) the best practice is to:

Change the “and” to “or” & choose the highest level verb.

Students should be able to <analyze> ,the
<social>, <political> **OR** <environmental>
consequences of climate change.

Please Note:

Outcomes are for our students to know what they will be able to do upon completion of a course. Clear and simple is better for comprehension. Specific details and long lists can be included in the assignment.

Learning Outcomes as the Basis for Designing Courses

5 things to consider when designing courses

1. **What do you want the student to be able to do? (Outcome)**
2. **What does the student need to know in order to do this well? (Curriculum)**
3. **What activity will facilitate the learning? (Pedagogy)**
4. **How will the student demonstrate the learning? (Assessment)**
5. **How will I know the student has done this well? (Criteria)**

References

- Association for College & Research Libraries (2005). Writing Learning Outcomes Best Practices. Presented at ACRL's Information Literacy Immersion Summer 2005. Retrieved from: http://www.powershow.com/view/3b8b0a-MDFiY/Writing_Learning_Outcomes_powerpoint_ppt_presentation
- Higher Learning Commission (October, 2016). Writing Learning Outcomes. Assessing General Education. Presented at the Assessing General Education workshop, Oakbrook, IL.
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