Friday, January 31 2014
12:00pm-2:00pm
509 Theatre Building

WRITING AND REVISING PROGRAM
LEARNING OUTCOMES

Ellen Meents-DeCaigny; Associate Vice President, Assessment, Planning & Communications
Division of Student Affairs

Jen Sweet; Associate Director, Assessment
Office for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment
WORKSHOP AGENDA

• Definition and Purpose of Learning Outcomes
• Considerations When Writing Learning Outcomes
• How to Write Effective Learning Outcomes
WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

Participants will be able to . . .

• Distinguish between learning outcomes and related concepts
• Distinguish between levels of learning outcomes
• Identify relevant considerations when writing learning outcomes
• Write effective learning outcomes
Definition and Purpose of Learning Outcomes
LEARNING OUTCOMES & YOU
WHAT IS A LEARNING OUTCOME?

A statement in specific and measurable terms of what a student will know or be able to do as the result of having successfully completed a program.
CHARACTERISTICS OF LEARNING OUTCOMES (MAKI, 2010)

- Describes what a student should be able to demonstrate, represent, or produce
- Relies on active verbs
- Aligns with collective program and institutional level educational intentions
CHARACTERISTICS OF INSTITUTION AND PROGRAM LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOMES (MAKI, 2010)

- Maps to the curriculum, co-curriculum, and education practices that offer multiple and varied opportunities for students
- Is collaboratively authored and collectively accepted
- Incorporates or adapts professional organizations’ outcomes statements
- Can be quantitatively or qualitatively assessed
PURPOSE OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

• Learning outcomes inform students of what knowledge and skills they will gain through the course of a program of study.

• They indicate what knowledge, skills and abilities students will have mastered (and the level of mastery) at the end of their course of study.

• They communicate expected standards of performance.

• They provide a structure for evaluating student learning.
RELATED (BUT DIFFERENT) CONCEPTS

Learning Goals and Domains

Learning Objectives

Expectations

Performance Metrics
# LEARNING OUTCOMES VS. PERFORMANCE METRICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Performance Metrics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Derived from mission and purpose</td>
<td>Derived from description of the work of department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures contributions to student learning (was the experience transformative?)</td>
<td>Measure performance of the work (did students complete a task?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement = Effectiveness</td>
<td>Achievement = Productivity, Satisfaction or Accomplishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Require criteria to define levels of effectiveness</td>
<td>Require criteria to define levels of performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual and collective feedback to shape department programs and services</td>
<td>Individual feedback to shape department systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment: how effective were we?</td>
<td>Assessment: how well did we perform our tasks?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the train headed in the right direction?</td>
<td>Is the train on time?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are students learning something?</td>
<td>Are students satisfied with our programs and services?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Questions about Definition and Purpose of Learning Outcomes?
Considerations for Writing Learning Outcomes
LEVELS OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning Outcomes may be defined at different levels within the university.

Each are related to those before and after, but specify learning at a specific level.
LAYERS OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

University Goals

College/School/Divisional Learning Outcomes

Departmental Learning Outcomes

Program Learning Outcomes

Course/Activity-Based Learning Outcomes
LEVELS OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

• College/School/Divisional Learning Outcomes
  allows for integration, shared responsibility for student learning across departments

• Departmental Learning Outcomes
  students can learn through multiple programs and services offered within the department

• Programmatic Learning Outcomes
  students can achieve through participating in one or more courses, activities, or services within one program area of a department

• Course/Activity-Based Learning Outcomes
  students can achieve through participation in a singular activity or service at one point in time
ELEMENTS OF LEARNING OUTCOMES-
WHAT WE ARE TAUGHT

Course/Activity Level Outcomes- measuring one specific point in time

“At the end of this workshop, you will be able to…”

“Students who successfully complete this course will be able to…”

“Students who participate in a judicial hearing will be able to…”
WHAT DO WE MISS WHEN WE ARE SO FOCUSED?
LEVEL OF SPECIFICITY AND REACH

Learning gets more specific

Course/Activity Learning Outcomes
Program Learning Outcomes
Department Learning Outcomes
College/School/Division Learning Outcomes
University Learning Goals & Outcomes
ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR WRITING LEARNING OUTCOMES

• Core Curricular and Co-Curricular Goals

• Influence of previous and subsequent learning outcomes on program learning outcomes

• Standards from professional organizations in field
“KSAVES”

When constructing learning outcomes, consider the essential:

Knowledge
Skills
Abilities
Values
Ethics

students should possess by the time they complete a program, then “operationalize”
PRACTICE-READY!

• What are the most important things for students to learn in the program?
• What will students need to be able to do to take the next step after they graduate from the program (work, continuing education, etc.)?
Questions about Considerations for Writing Learning Outcomes?
Writing Effective Learning Outcomes
THE A.B.C.D. METHOD

- **A** **Audience**—Who is the learner?
- **B** **Behavior**—What is the measurable behavior?
- **C** **Condition**—Under what circumstances should the learner be able to perform?
- **D** **Degree**—At what level does the behavior need to be performed?

### ABCD EXAMPLE FOR ACTIVITY LEVEL OUTCOMES

As a result of the workshop, students **will name** the four ways of *Interfaith Dialogue*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree of Achievement</td>
<td></td>
<td>(future tense)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TOOLS THAT HELP DISTINGUISH LEVELS OF LEARNING

- Bloom’s Taxonomy: Cognitive
- Bloom & Krathwohol’s Taxonomy: Affective
BLOOM’S TAXONOMY: COGNITIVE DOMAIN

Knowledge
Comprehension
Application
Analysis
Synthesis
Evaluation

# COGNITIVE DOMAIN VERBS

## Definition
- **Knowledge**: Ability to recall previously learned material.
- **Comprehension**: Ability to show a basic understanding of material.
- **Application**: Ability to apply learning in new situations.
- **Analysis**: Ability to logically differentiate between the content and structure of material.
- **Synthesis**: Ability to create new content and structures.
- **Evaluation**: Ability to judge the value of material for a given purpose.

## Sample Verbs
- **Knowledge**
  - identify
  - label
  - recall
  - reproduce
  - state
- **Comprehension**
  - define
  - describe
  - explain
  - paraphrase
  - provide example
- **Application**
  - apply
  - demonstrate
  - determine
  - prepare
  - use
- **Analysis**
  - analyze
  - compare/contrast
  - differentiate
  - distinguish
  - investigate
- **Synthesis**
  - construct
  - create
  - design
  - develop
  - generate
- **Evaluation**
  - assess
  - critique
  - evaluation
  - justify
  - support

BLOOM’S & KRATHWOHL’S TAXONOMY: AFFECTIVE DOMAIN

Internalizing
Values

Organizing & Conceptualizing

Valuing

Responding

Receiving

# Affective Domain Verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Receiving</th>
<th>Responding</th>
<th>Valuing</th>
<th>Organizing/Conceptualizing</th>
<th>Internalizing Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being aware of or sensitive to ideas or phenomena.</td>
<td>Actively responding to or showing new behaviors as a result of new ideas or phenomena.</td>
<td>Showing involvement or commitment.</td>
<td>Integrating values into one's priorities/set of values.</td>
<td>Acting in accordance with the new value.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sample Verbs:**
- Receiving: accept, acknowledge, attend, listen, observe
- Responding: clarify, contribute, question, react, respond
- Valuing: demonstrate, join, justify, participate, support
- Organizing/Conceptualizing: commit, modify, prioritize, reconcile, synthesize
- Internalizing Values: act, display, exhibit, perform, practice

GROUP ACTIVITY

In small groups take 5 minutes to draft one learning outcome using the ABCD model.
THE A.B.C.D. METHOD

• **A**  Audience—Who is the learner?
• **B**  Behavior—What is the measurable behavior?
• **C**  Condition—Under what circumstances should the learner be able to perform?
• **D**  Degree—At what level does the behavior need to be performed?

BEST PRACTICES IN WRITING LEARNING OUTCOMES

• Student-Centered
• Essential and Significant
• Clear and Concise
• Use Action Verbs
• Measurable/Observable
• Manageable Number

What are Characteristics of Good Student Learning Outcomes? ; http://condor.depaul.tla/Learning/what.html
COMMON PITFALLS

- Using “understand,” “have knowledge of,” “be aware of,” “appreciate”…
- Including how an outcome will be measured in the text of an outcome
- Focusing on yourself rather than the student
- Too many outcomes
- Not enough outcomes
ASSESS THIS OUTCOME!

For each of the following Learning Outcomes:

• Is this a good learning outcome?

• If not, how could it be rewritten to be better?
Students demonstrate a reasonably high degree of competency of technical execution appropriate to the chosen medium.
All xxxxx majors will learn the role technology and the new media are playing in the current and future worlds of news gathering and dissemination. Our course work will emphasize that the arrival of internet and broadband technology as well as satellite and videotape technology is as significant in its own way as the Gutenberg Revolution and the introduction of the telegraph were to the future of journalism. Each has accelerated the news cycle as never before and challenged journalists to get the news fast and to get it right. Our students will learn how to do both.
Students who participate in leadership development or leadership training initiatives will determine how leadership theories or models inform their leadership.
Knowledge of Contracts
In this program, students will acquire core knowledge in a particular technology discipline.
Students who participate in fighting injustice (direct service, advocacy, activism) will engage in critical reflection and identify current local, national, and/or global social justice issues.
At the completion of the program, students will be able to demonstrate improved ability to identify, analyze, and evaluate arguments effectively.
Students should be able to write lab reports that effectively integrate text, data analysis, and graphics into a document that adequately explains the procedures and supports the stated conclusions.
Questions about Writing Learning Outcomes?
RESOURCES FOR WRITING LEARNING OUTCOMES AT DEPAUL

Office for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

Associate Director, Assessment

TLA website: http://condor.depaul.edu/tla/Learning/creating_outcomes.html

Course-level: Assistant Director, Teaching Support

Teaching Commons:
http://teachingcommons.depaul.edu/Course_Design/developing_a_course/goals.html

Student Affairs

Associate Vice President for Assessment, Planning, and Communications

Assessment Coordinator