

Starting Off Right

Engaging Activities for Facilitating the Writing of Learning Outcomes

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Learning Objectives

1. Explain why writing effective learning outcomes is a critical step in the course design process using activities.
2. Apply activities for developing course learning outcomes and facilitating the process with others.
3. Apply strategies for maintaining course alignment and facilitating this process with others.



Background

- Online and hybrid courses are generally 7 weeks long and several learning outcomes are written for each weekly module
- Courses are developed using a backward design approach
- Course designers are required to participate in a series of four workshops, the first of which focuses on the writing of learning outcomes and identifying assessment strategies
- Prior to the first workshop, course designers are asked to identify the general course goals (usually already in existence) and identify topic names for the 7 modules



First Workshop Steps

- 1. The Warm-up**
2. Getting to Know Bloom's
3. Bloom's as a Tool
4. Drafting Outcomes
5. Identifying Assessments



Step 1: The Warm-up

Activity:
Course Content Considerations



Course Content Considerations

Course Development Considerations	Answers regarding your course
What information or content do you want students to learn from the course?	
What do you want students to do with that information?	
What skills or competencies do you want students to learn, develop, expand, or improve?	
What methods will you use to check for student understanding?	
If someone asks the students what they took away from your course, how would you like them to answer?	



- What information or content do you want students to learn from this course?
- What do you want students to do with that information?
- What skills or competencies do you want students to learn, develop, expand, or improve?
- What methods will you use to check for student understanding?
- If someone asks the students what they took away from your course, how would you like them to answer?



Content Considerations: Why it works

1. Course designers get to think, write and talk about the curriculum and assessment for their course in a non-threatening and familiar way
2. It helps course designers to think about the course in terms of “takeaways” rather than just “content”
3. It sets the stage for writing learning outcomes
4. It helps the instructional designers learn more about each course and what is important to the course designers



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Step 2: Getting to Know Bloom's

Activity:
Verb Sort



Remembering	Understanding	Applying	Analyzing	Evaluating	Creating



Interpret	Infer	Recommend	Calculate	Prepare
Compare	Predict	Discover	Apply	Describe
Estimate	Identify	Critique	Develop	Explain
Differentiate	Support	Distinguish	List	Summarize
Choose	Memorize	Argue	Define	Edit



Verb Sort: Why it Works

1. Course designers get to interact with the levels of Bloom's Taxonomy in a meaningful way
2. Course designers gain an appreciation of the importance of nuance in selecting verbs for learning outcomes; that verbs can be understood differently within different contexts and choosing the best possible verb will help clarify the meaning of their learning outcomes



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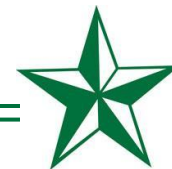


Step 3: Bloom's as a Tool

Activity:
Verb Wish List



Action Words for Bloom's Taxonomy					
Knowledge	Understand	Apply	Analyze	Evaluate	Create
define	explain	solve	analyze	reframe	design
identify	describe	apply	compare	criticize	compose
describe	interpret	illustrate	classify	evaluate	create
label	paraphrase	modify	contrast	order	plan
list	summarize	use	distinguish	appraise	combine
name	classify	calculate	infer	judge	formulate
state	compare	change	separate	support	invent
match	differentiate	choose	explain	compare	hypothesize
recognize	discuss	demonstrate	select	decide	substitute
select	distinguish	discover	categorize	discriminate	write
examine	extend	experiment	connect	recommend	compile
locate	predict	relate	differentiate	summarize	construct
memorize	associate	show	discriminate	assess	develop
quote	contrast	sketch	divide	choose	generalize
recall	convert	complete	order	convince	integrate
reproduce	demonstrate	construct	point out	defend	modify
tabulate	estimate	dramatize	prioritize	estimate	organize
tell	express	interpret	subdivide	find errors	prepare
copy	identify	manipulate	survey	grade	produce
discover	indicate	paint	advertise	measure	rearrange
duplicate	infer	prepare	appraise	predict	rewrite
enumerate	relate	produce	break down	rank	role-play
listen	restate	report	calculate	score	adapt
observe	select	teach	conclude	select	anticipate
omit	translate	act	correlate	test	arrange
read	ask	administer	criticize	argue	assemble
recite	cite	articulate	deduce	conclude	choose
record	discover	chart	devise	consider	collaborate
repeat	generalize	collect	diagram	critique	collect
retell	give examples	compute	dissect	debate	devise
visualize	group	determine	estimate	distinguish	express
	illustrate	develop	evaluate	editorialize	facilitate
	judge	employ	experiment	justify	imagine
	observe	establish	focus	persuade	infer
	order	examine	illustrate	rate	intervene
	report	explain	organize	weigh	justify
	represent	interview	outline		make
	research	judge	plan		manage
	review	list	question		negotiate
	rewrite	operate	test		originate
	show	practice			propose
	trace	predict			reorganize
	transform	record			report
		schedule			revise
		simulate			schematize
		transfer			simulate
		write			solve
					speculate
					structure
					support
					test
					validate



Verb Wish List: Why it Works

1. Course designers become familiar with a useful tool for writing learning outcomes
2. Course designers are given a “head-start” for the actual writing of learning outcomes
3. Course designers think carefully about what they want their students to do as part of the course
4. Course designers see a visual representation of how their course fits within Bloom’s taxonomy and have an opportunity to reflect on this before proceeding with the writing of the specific learning outcomes



Action Words for Bloom's Taxonomy					
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define	explain	solve	analyze	reframe	design
	describe	apply	compare	criticize	
describe	interpret	illustrate	classify	evaluate	create
label	paraphrase	modify	contrast	order	plan
	summarize	use		appraise	
name	classify	calculate	infer	judge	formulate
state		change	separate	support	
match	differentiate	choose	explain	compare	hypothesize
	discuss	demonstrate	select	decide	substitute
select	distinguish	discover	categorize		
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memorize	associate	show	discriminate	assess	develop
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reproduce	demonstrate		point out	defend	
tabulate	estimate	dramatize	prioritize	estimate	
tell	express	interpret	subdivide	find errors	prepare
copy	identify	manipulate	survey	grade	produce
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Step 4: Drafting Outcomes

Activity:
Whole Group Practice



Step 4: Drafting Outcomes

Activity:
Writing Week 1 Outcomes



Course Mapping

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	Topic Name	Learning Outcomes (Action Verb + Context)	
Topic 1			



Drafting Outcomes: Why it Works

1. Course designers see how outcomes relate to their own learning experience
2. Course designers have an opportunity to practice before working on their own
3. Instructional designers can intervene if any course designers are on the wrong track



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5. **Identifying Assessments**



Step 5: Identifying Assessments

Activity:
Assessment Wish List



Possible Assessment Options

Research Paper
Reaction Paper
Argumentative Essay
Descriptive Essay
Quiz
Student-created rubric
Interview
Survey (Create and/or Administer)
Journal
Concept Map
Peer Evaluation or Feedback
Image/Audio/Video Collection
Document/Image Annotation
Bookmark Collection
Student Presentation
Portfolio
Video Analysis/Quiz
Create Timeline
Case Study
Student-created Anthologies
Discussion
Video Creation
Site/Event Visit
Annotated bibliography
Debate
Letter



Step 5: Identifying Assessments

Activity:
Matching Assessments
and Outcomes



The second workshop focuses on strategies for delivering content and strategies for providing opportunities for students to engage with content and practice skills



Course Mapping

	Topic Name	Learning Outcomes (Action Verb + Context)	How Can Students Provide Evidence that the Outcome is Met?
Topic 1			



Wish List & Matching: Why they Work

1. Course designers see first hand how the backward design process works
2. Assessments are identified early-on in the process and are not something to be dreaded
3. Alignment issues between outcomes and assessments are avoided



How Do Faculty Respond?

- “[The course design process] was much more structured than I expected, but that was welcome”
- What do you consider to be the best or most helpful parts of the course development process?: “The course outline, and making assessment goals at the beginning”
- “Their way of helping us design course goals revolutionized my approach to that topic and made it meaningful for classroom instruction”



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Understanding

Applying

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		simulate			schematize
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					speculate
					structure
					support
					test
					validate

Possible Assessment Options

Research Paper
Reaction Paper
Argumentative Essay
Descriptive Essay
Quiz
Student-created rubric
Interview
Survey (Create and/or Administer)
Journal
Concept Map
Peer Evaluation or Feedback
Image/Audio/Video Collection
Document/Image Annotation
Bookmark Collection
Student Presentation
Portfolio
Video Analysis/Quiz
Create Timeline
Case Study
Student-created Anthologies
Discussion
Video Creation
Site/Event Visit
Annotated bibliography
Debate
Letter