

How to formulate measurable Learning Outcomes



Or how to keep my job!

Student Affairs Retreat – Spring 2010

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How to formulate measurable Learning Outcomes

After attending the SA Workshop, the participants will be able to:

Label the four areas of a learning outcome

Identify the four aspects a LO must address

Formulate at least one learning outcome specific to your department

Writing Learning Outcomes

Focus on writing a LO on what you want the student to learn, know, do, or value from your activity/program.

It is a specific statement of what participants will be able to know or achieve as a result of their engagement.

Writing Learning Outcomes

Phrase any LO as a **learning objective**, which can be measured by using action verbs such as identify, explain, describe, able to

Stated **“learning objectives”** are essential when preparing teaching lesson plans in academia.

Writing Learning Outcomes

Some example learning objectives:

- **A successful student from this program will be able to...**
- **On successful completion of the _____, students will be able to**
- **Students will be able to**

Writing Learning Outcomes

There are two aspects to keep in mind when writing LOs. The first is to determine the purpose of the LO. Each statement **MUST** address the following:

- **Knowledge acquisition**
 - **Skill improvement**
 - **Behavior change**
- **Environment/culture**

Writing Learning Outcomes

The second is to **LABEL** each component of the LO. Labeling the components simplifies the desired outcome. They are as follows:

1. **A = audience, which addresses “who”**
2. **B = behavior, which addresses “what”**
3. **C = condition, which addresses “when”**
4. **D = degree, which addresses “how well”**

Writing Learning Outcomes

LO Example #1: Assessing Career Development Center

After attending a CDC workshop, students will be able to describe the three steps in the career development model, (assess, explore, take action).

Exercise – label the A, B, C, and D in this LO.

1. **A = audience, which addresses “who”**
2. **B = behavior, which addresses “what”**
3. **C = condition, which addresses “when”**
4. **D = degree, which addresses “how well”**

Writing Learning Outcomes

Labeling the LO correctly:

After attending a CDC orientation workshop

(C – condition), students (A – audience) will be able to describe (B – behavior) the three steps (D – degree) in the career development model (assess, explore, take action)

Writing Learning Outcomes

LO Example #2: Assessing Sykes Staff Training:

At the end of the August staff training , Sykes Union employees will be able to demonstrate their integral role in the operation of Sykes Union

Exercise – in this LO, label the A, B, C, and D.

- 1. A = audience, which addresses “who”**
- 2. B = behavior, which addresses “what”**
- 3. C = condition, which addresses “when”**
- 4. D = degree, which addresses “how well”, not always present**

Writing Learning Outcomes

Labeling the LO correctly:

At the end of the August staff training (C – condition), Sykes Union employees (A – audience) will be able to demonstrate (B – behavior) their integral role in the operation of Sykes Union

Writing Learning Outcomes

LO Example #3: Assessing RHA Officer Training:

At the completion of RHA Officer Training all Hall Council Special Programs Chairpersons will be able to identify four activities that earn Project Pride points.

Exercise – in this LO, label the A, B, C, and D.

- 1. A = audience, which addresses “who”**
- 2. B = behavior, which addresses “what”**
- 3. C = condition, which addresses “when”**
- 4. D = degree, which addresses “how well”, not always present**

Writing Learning Outcomes

LO Example #3: Assessing RHA Officer Training:

Labeling the LO correctly:

At the completion of RHA Officer Training (C – condition), all Hall Council Special Programs Chairpersons (A – audience) will be able to identify (B – behavior) four activities that earn Project Pride points (D – degree) .

Writing Learning Outcomes

At James Madison University the IM staff assessed their intramural sports team captains' sportsmanship (2001). They listed four specific learning outcomes.

When asked by an Intramural Sports Coordinator, students attending the Team Captains' meetings will be able to:

1. define sportsmanship
2. relate sportsmanship to game situations
3. appropriately model sportsmanship behavior
4. articulate the value of sportsmanship

Writing Learning Outcomes

When asked by an Intramural Sports Coordinator, students attending the Team Captains' meetings will be able to:

1. define sportsmanship
2. relate sportsmanship to game situations
3. appropriately model sportsmanship behavior
4. articulate the value of sportsmanship

Label A, B, C, and D.

Writing Learning Outcomes

When asked by an Intramural Sports Coordinator, (C - condition), students (A - audience) attending the Team Captains' meetings will be able to:

1. define (B - behavior) sportsmanship
2. relate (B - behavior) sportsmanship to game situations
3. appropriately model (B - behavior) sportsmanship behavior
4. articulate (B - behavior) the value of sportsmanship

Writing Learning Outcomes

The Division of Student Affairs Learning Outcomes:

1. Use critical, reflective, and analytical thinking....
2. Respond thoroughly to social responsibility ...
3. Exhibit a commitment to civic engagement and...
4. Demonstrate a sensibility, understanding , and...
5. Develop, enhance, clarify, and communicate...
6. Display the ability to integrate and supply knowledge
7. Achieve academic success and persist to graduation

Writing Learning Outcomes

Each of the seven Divisional Student LOs have specific sub-LOs addressing the main LO.

These can serve as a reference point in formulating specific LOs for your program/department.

References

- Carr, J., & Bobbitt, S. (2008). "The "O" word.....Learning outcomes in the life of a recreational professional". NIRSA National Conference, Austin, TX.**
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- Weber State University (2009). Introduction to student learning outcomes assessment. Available on <http://www.weber.edu/StudentAffairs/com/SLOTF/guidelines.html>.**