Why, What, How and Where of Learning Outcomes

Summary

Well written learning outcomes present the content, strategies, and assessments that will ensure the success of the students, the faculty, and, ultimately, the institution.

Why do we need learning outcomes? Because they…

- Give you an idea of the range and scope of content and may indicate specific topic areas.
- Tell what students are expected to know and be able to do after instruction.
- Tell what students must be able to do and know after the instruction is completed.
- Provide a "yardstick" or criteria to use to measure learning achievements.

Parts of Learning Outcomes

- Antecedent
  Conditions, facilities, materials, equipment, required to demonstrate the learning outcome
- Behavior
  Action students performs when demonstrating the learning outcome
- Criterion
  Standard or degree that must be met when student performs the learning outcome

Tips for Writing Learning Outcomes

1. Focus on student performance
2. Focus on product
3. Focus on terminal behavior
4. Focus on one solid outcome
5. Start with a verb that specifies definite observable behavior.
6. Include higher-order thinking skills

Checklist for Writing Learning Outcomes

1. What does the learner need in order to perform the action?
2. Do these needs require specification?
3. What action must the learning take?
4. What result comes from the action?
5. Can the action be observed?
6. Can the action be measured?
7. Does the measurement need to be specified?

Ensure Alignment with All Levels of Learning

- Course goals
- Course learning outcomes
- Unit learning outcomes
- Class learning outcomes