



Part 1

IT STARTS WITH THE OUTCOMES

What Makes A Good Outcome?

Student-centered

Faculty/staff should collaboratively author and collectively accept

Clear and concise

Observable & Measurable

Use action verbs

Manageable number

Tied to core curricular and co-curricular mission/goals/values

Consider professional organizations' expectations (as appropriate)

(Realistically) Aspirational/Developmental (at the right level for your students)

Meaningful

If Learning Outcomes Were Math...

- **Basic formula:**

Students + will (or will be able to) + action verb

(target audience) (future tense) (measurable behavior)

+ description with measure/target = **Learning Outcome!**

(description of what students will know or be able to do)

- **Example:**

Students + will (or will be able to) + action verb

(Econ 450 Students (will be able to) (successfully model)

+ description with measure/target = **Learning Outcome!**

(growth patterns of a business using linear data as evident by scoring a 70% on Test 5.)

Adding To The Equation

- Outcomes should include:
 - *Degree of achievement*
 - *Criteria*
 - *Target for success*

<http://assessment.uconn.edu/primer/goals1.html>

http://www.uta.edu/ier/Resources/ABCD_Outcome_Writing_Model.pdf

<http://ets.tlt.psu.edu/learningdesign/objectives/writingobjectives>

Success

- The target guides your action plan and informs you on how to change current practices for an effective outcome.
- The target allows you to look and answer with “yes” or “no” precision on whether the outcome is met.
- The target also guide the measure(s) you decide to use.
- Targets and measures can always be changed.



Part 2

CONSIDERING A MEASURE

What Should You Consider When Choosing An Assessment Measure?

- Assessment measure is compatible with the outcome
- The measure selected should provide reasonably accurate, useful information
- The measure should yield results specific enough to know where improvements can be made
- Assessment measure matches the cognitive level of the outcome (for student learning outcomes)



When Selecting Your Measure What Should You Ask?

- Is the measure a reasonable indicator for the cognitive level specified in the student learning outcome?
- Would this assessment method assist the program in other ways (meeting accreditation standards, provide feedback to students, etc.)?
- Will the results of the assessment produce data that are trustworthy and understandable?
- Is the development/preparation time involved in using this measure reasonable?



Part 3

TYPES OF MEASURES

Direct Measures

- Direct measures are tangible, visible, and observable.
 - Allow someone to directly observe the student learning, usually via student work embedded in a course
 - Show a demonstration of a students' knowledge or skill
 - Indicate a service or activity implemented by the program



Examples Of Direct Measures

- Student artifacts (ex. capstone projects, portfolios, presentations, case studies, etc.) examined by learning outcome and scored with a rubric
- Externally reviewed exhibitions, performances, or projects scored by a set standard such as an exam or rubric
- External evaluation of performance during internships based on outcomes.
- Commercially-developed tests, locally-developed tests, national licensure exams or professional exams
 - Make sure any external measure is reviewed for alignment with your learning outcomes.

Indirect Measures

- An indirect measure is subjective and not directly observable.
 - Asks students to reflect on their learning or abilities but does not provide direct evidence of the learning
 - Infers student knowledge

Examples Of Indirect Measures

- Survey research: National or local instruments
 - National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
 - Faculty surveys
 - Course evaluations
- Employer satisfaction studies and advisory boards
- Exit interviews and student focus groups
- Self-assessments
- Peer ratings



Presentation includes information from workshops originally presented by DePaul University, Loyola University, & Virginia Tech

Combining Measures

- For each student learning outcome the program should (but not always) have a combination of both direct and indirect indicators of student learning.
- Multiple measures (data points) will give you a more accurate understanding of your program.

Conclusion

- Have quality outcomes that are measurable and meaningful.
- Provide a target and level of success.
- Select and align the appropriate measure(s) to the outcome.
- Any questions?

Resources

- *List of Assessment Conferences.* <http://www.assessmentconferences.com/>
- Indiana University and Purdue University Assessment Institute. <http://assessmentinstitute.iupui.edu/>
- Association of Assessment of Learning in Higher Education. <http://www.aalhe.org/resource-room/>
- Assessment List serve: <http://lsv.uky.edu/archives/assess.html>
- Online and in-person workshops by the following experts (search for a location near you):
 - Marilee Bresciani
 - Trudy Banta
 - George Kuh
 - Linda Suskie