

How to Write Student Learning Outcomes

Definition:

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students possess and can demonstrate upon completing a course or program of study.

The Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) you develop must describe what your students should be able to DO at the end of the course or program you teach. Getting the SLO right is critical as later you will administer assessments to determine how well your students mastered the course or program SLO.

Guidelines for SLOs:

1. SLOs use action verbs from Bloom's Taxonomy with an emphasis on higher-order thinking skills.
2. There should be 3-4 SLOs for each class or program. When in doubt, fewer is better.
3. SLOs should be included in course syllabi.
4. SLOs should be the same for all sections of a course. However, each instructor may include on their course syllabi additional outcomes and/or course expectations.
5. SLOs should be written in language that students (and those outside the field) are able to understand.
6. SLOs are typically not content-specific.
7. SLOs should focus on big-picture, overarching concepts, skills, or attitudes.
8. SLOs ask students to apply what they have learned.
9. SLOs must be assessable and should suggest or imply an assessment. If they do include the method of assessment, it should not be too specific - a given SLO for a course should be appropriate for anyone teaching the course.
10. Avoid starting SLOs with the words such as "understand", "learn", "know", etc. since these indicate internal mental processes for the students. (It might be possible to use words like this if the assessment method is indicated in the SLO.) Focus instead on what students will be able to do, produce, or demonstrate.
11. Ideally, each course or program should include SLOs from more than one domain (cognitive, psychomotor, and affective).
12. When writing SLOs, think about how you will assess each one.

Examples of Student Learning Outcomes (written by San Diego Continuing Education instructors)

SLOs for Adult Basic Education/ Adult Secondary Education

Intermediate Math

The intermediate math students will demonstrate the ability to use ratios and proportions by modifying quantities in recipes to accommodate larger or smaller portions.

Mid-Level ABE Writing

Students will be able to demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge in writing by composing paragraphs that respond to a prompt, show organization, and accurately use writing conventions of Standard English.

Economics course

Upon

satisfactory completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Students will be able to assess their personal finances over the past year.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge of Basic Principles of Economics e.g. students will demonstrate how to formulate a household budget.
3. Students will demonstrate how to apply and follow the basic budget by producing a personal budget table.

Business Information Technology Course SLOs (1/25/10)

COMP 627 – Basic Web Server Security

1. Students completing COMP 627 will be able to demonstrate the knowledge and skills to setup Secure Socket Layers (SSL) for both the Apache and IIS web servers. (From Dept. SLO 1.)
2. Students completing COMP 627 will be able to evaluate a website to determine whether all or part of it should be protected with SSL (From Dept. SLO 3.)
3. Students completing COMP 627 will be able to demonstrate knowledge of what a “Certificate” is for a website and how it may protect both the website itself and individuals who visit and use the website. (From SLO 3.)

OFSY 516 – Internet Basics

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of basics of Internet concepts and terminology.
2. Students will be able to identify hardware and software components for a successful Internet connection.
3. Students completing Internet Basics will exhibit various techniques in navigating, locating, and researching websites

Student Learning Outcomes for Graphic Arts 20 – Production Art and Design Studio (Langley College)

Upon satisfactory completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Utilize standard situational sequential problem solving techniques in developing creative graphic designs.
2. Prepare professional quality presentation art.
3. Deliver a verbal presentation of prepared design solutions to a group.
4. Produce a high quality student portfolio for design projects.