

Recommendations for Writing Objectives

If you are new to this process, you will certainly have many questions. If your department has not appointed a “go to” person for help, there is probably someone who functions unofficially as such. If all else fails, contact your college curriculum committee.

General Comments

- Writing good objectives should not be viewed as an isolated function but should be integrated with the course description and course level characteristics so that all taken together present a consistent view of the course.
- Make sure that the course description, objectives and course level characteristics all describe the same level course. Inconsistencies among these three areas are a common problem. Refer to the aids available from Academic affairs on writing objectives and course level characteristics. These are available under the “Forms” menu on the Academic affairs website.
<http://www.uco.edu/academicaffairs/forms.htm>
- The vocabulary in the document on writing objectives is based on Bloom’s taxonomy with higher levels of intellectual ability moving from left to right. A 1000 level course should use predominantly those on the left and a 5000 level course predominantly those on the right.

The Course Description

- In writing the course description you should keep in mind the level of the course and describe it so as to make clear why it has received its designated level.
- The course description must be in standard English with no incomplete sentences.

Course Objectives

- Objectives should relate to outcomes not process. A simple phrase to use that will help focus on outcomes is “Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to:”
- Objectives should be measurable or capable of evaluation and relate to learning levels appropriate to the course level. Reference to vocabulary in the objectives document will help. As examples:
 - Process = As a requirement of this course the student will write a research paper.
 - Outcome = Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to produce a research paper that demonstrates a command of research method and formal style.
 - Process = In this course the student will study literature from at least two style periods.
 - Outcome = Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to demonstrate through performance a command of the performance practice of music literature from two different style periods.

- “Bulleted” objectives are perfectly acceptable and are much easier to read than prose. When objectives are written in a prose paragraph there seems to be a tendency for them to restate the course description or to become process-oriented.
- A limited number of well-written objectives communicate the purpose of course better than a large number of vague, redundant, or process-oriented ones.

Course level Characteristics

- You must cut and paste into your proposal the appropriate text box from the Academic Affairs site for course level characteristics.
- Though you do not necessarily have to address every area stated in the course level characteristics table, you must produce a clear, concise and convincing demonstration that the requirements of the class are at the appropriate level. Again, the language recommended for course level characteristics can be very helpful as a guide.