

Writing End-of-Course Learning Outcomes

Definition: Student learning outcomes describe what students are able to demonstrate in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes upon completion of a program. When writing student learning outcomes, focus on student behavior and use simple, specific action verbs to describe what students are expected to demonstrate upon completion of a course. The verb must describe an action that is observable, measurable and results or reflects an outcome. Some verbs are suitable for more than one category. This may not be an exhaustive list. Most college end of course outcomes should start at the application level or above where they apply the knowledge and comprehension they have learned in the course.

Type of Learning	Examples of Action Verbs
Knowledge – to recall or remember facts without necessarily understanding them	Articulate, Define, Describe, Group, Identify, Indicate, Label, Locate, Match, Name, Order, Outline, Recognize, Relate, Recall, Reproduce, Select, Show, Tell, Label, Tabulate, Quote, List
Comprehension – to understand and interpret learned information	Associate, Change, Classify, Contrast, Convert, Describe, Explain, Express, Extend, Interpret, Restate, Reword, Translate
Application – to put ideas and concepts to work in solving problems	Apply, choose, compute, demonstrate, develop, employ, experiment, give examples, investigate, manipulate, operate, predict, schedule, solve, translate, use/utilize
Analysis – to break information into its components to see interrelationships	Analyze, appraise calculate, categorize, compare, contrast, criticize, critique, differentiate, distinguish, inspect, interpret, relate, simplify
Synthesis – to use creativity to compose and design something original	Arrange, assemble, collect, compose, construct, create, combine, compile, design, develop, formulate, generate, manage, organize, plan, prepare, produce, generate, reorganize, set up, structure, synthesize
Evaluation – to decide, judge, or select based on established criteria and rationale	Appraise, assess, compare, convince, conclude, criticize, defend, determine, evaluate, predict, prioritize, rate, summarize, support
Verbs best to avoid – Avoid behavior that is not measurable, not observable or does not necessarily reflect an outcome. Examples include discuss, study, explore (consider using explain, describe, or identify instead), learn, know, and understand (consider using a verb that reflects what the student can do to demonstrate these concepts).	

- This information was adapted from a Fall 2007 THECB-sponsored workshop.