Writing Learning Outcomes

Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness

Office of Academic Programs and Educational Effectiveness

Lehman College, The City University of New York

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About The Workshop

This is a 60 minute workshop

Purpose

To discuss the writing of student learning outcomes.

Workshop Learning Outcome

To be effective, assessment must be guided by clear goals and outcomes.

At the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

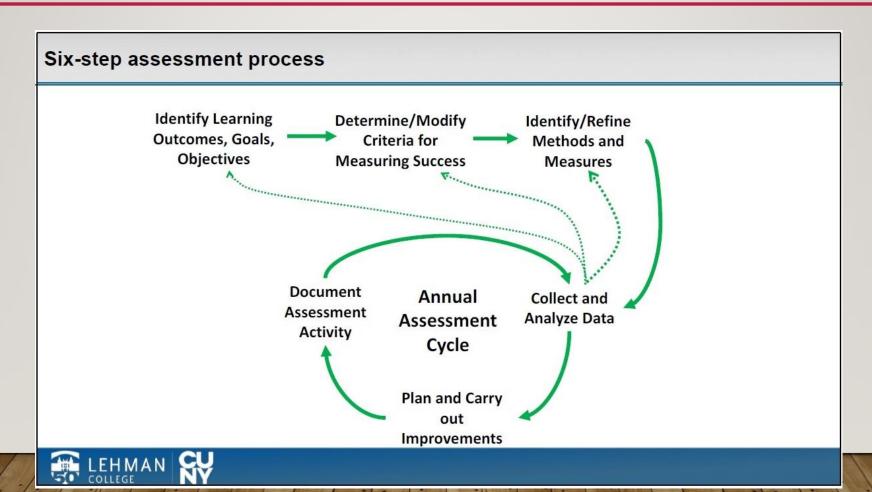- Write clear student learning outcomes

The Basics: Why Assessment?

- Are students learning what we want them to learn?
- What is working well, what could be improved, how are new initiatives faring?

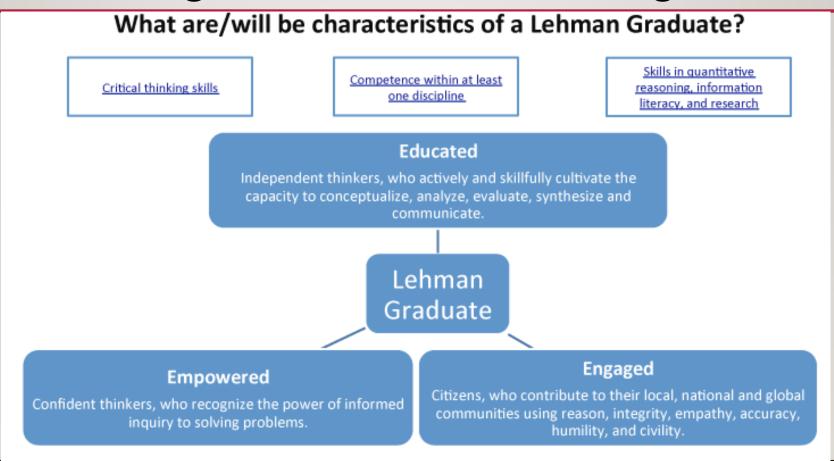Continuous improvement.

Lehman College's 6-Step Process

Goals

- Broad statements

- Focused on programs, courses, or units

- May or may not include student learning

- Useful to intended audiences (students, faculty, staff, administrators)

Lehman College's Institutional Learning Goals

What are/will be characteristics of a Lehman Graduate?

Critical thinking skills

Competence within at least one discipline

Skills in quantitative reasoning, information literacy, and research

Educated
Independent thinkers, who actively and skillfully cultivate the capacity to conceptualize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize and communicate.

Lehman Graduate

Empowered
Confident thinkers, who recognize the power of informed inquiry to solving problems.

Engaged
Citizens, who contribute to their local, national and global communities using reason, integrity, empathy, accuracy, humility, and civility.

Outstanding communication skills in diverse media

Ability to work collaboratively as part of a team

Potential for leadership

Multicultural, global and ethical awareness of diverse peoples and communities

Outcomes

- Specific

- Measurable

- Focused on students, customers, end-users

- Focused on the ends related to an activity

Outcomes operationalize goals

Outcomes

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ARE:

- Detailed Expectations of Students
- Knowledge
- Skills
- Disposition
- About the Impact of the Unit on Students

Source: Christopher Shults, PH.D. and Tammie Cumming, PH.D., "Building the Framework for Effective AES Assessment: Developing Mission, Goals, And Outcomes, May 11, 2018.

Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) concern:

- Knowledge (course content: facts, theories, etc.)

- Skills (capacities: critical thinking, information literacy, etc.)

- Dispositions (global perspectives, tolerance, civic engagement, etc.)

Student-centered

Good Outcomes

Key characteristics:

- Aligned with mission/goals (including ILOs)

- Specific

- Measurable

- Focused on priorities, high-impact areas

Promote meaningful improvement

Writing Outcomes

- Be clear

- Be descriptive

- Be specific

Communication matters: clearly describe specific outcomes

Writing Outcomes

Guiding Questions (at the heart of goals, objectives, and outcomes):

- What do we expect students to know?

- What do we expect students to be able to demonstrate?

- What dispositions or attitudes do we expect students to possess?

- How do we deliver student learning?

- What services do we provide?

- How do we support students?

- What need would go unmet if our program or office did not exist?

Writing Outcomes

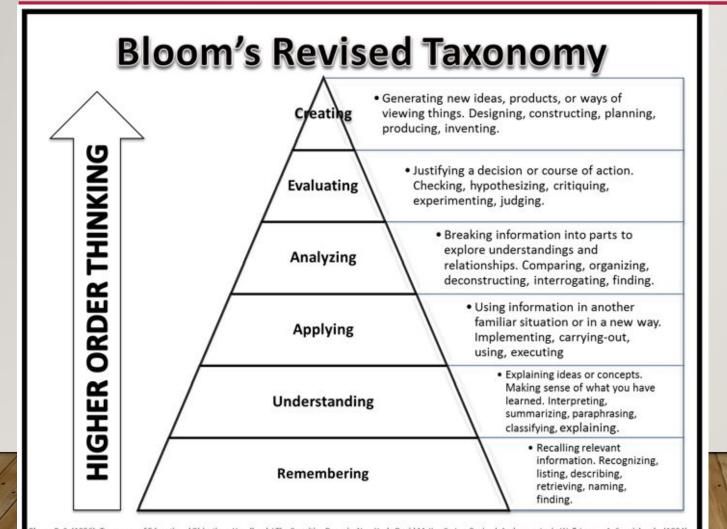Tip: Focus on what can be demonstrated, produced, or done.

Ambiguity is a roadblock to success

Writing Outcomes

Bloom's Taxonomy is a useful tool for articulating goals and outcomes.

Bloom's Taxonomy: Student Learning

Bloom's Taxonomy: Performance or Support

Source: Shults Dorime Williams Support Outcomes Taxonomy

Writing Outcomes

Learning Outcomes Template

"At the end of the course, students will be able **(1) to do something**, with **(2) some content**, by **(3) using some method.**"

(1) insert verb

(2) insert *knowledge, skills,* or *attitudes* the student is expected to develop

(3) insert how the *knowledge, skills,* or *attitudes* will be applied and assessed

Source: Purdue University

Writing Outcomes

Examples:

At the end of the BBA XXX course, you will be able to summarize an organization's external environment and internal setting by drafting a SWOT table.

At the end of the CLI XXX course, students will explain the impact of increasing atmospheric greenhouse gases using the greenhouse effect and the paleoclimate record.

Communication to Stakeholders

- Communication makes goals and outcomes explicit

- Explicit goals and outcomes enhance credibility and strengthen commitment

- Credibility and commitment increase the probability of attainment

Communication to Stakeholders

The website is a central location at which external and internal stakeholders can lean about programs, departments, units and offices.

Communication to Stakeholders

Best practices (website):

- Mission Statement

- Goals

- Objectives

- Learning, Support, Performance Outcomes

Closing the Loop

Action Plans

- Address findings from assessment reports

- Match with findings with outcomes

- Implementation is assessed

For Further Information

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