

# Developing an Assessment Plan and Writing Learning Outcomes

## Overarching Guidelines

- When someone reads your mission, objectives, and outcomes, they should know what your unit is trying to accomplish.
- Your outcomes should provide a focus for your work.
- More specifically, your outcomes should represent the most important aspects of your unit and paint a picture of what you are about.

## Definitions

- **Mission** – The purpose or essential function of your unit. What you are here for, what your essential values are, and who you serve.
- **Objectives** – Broad, general statements of (1) what the program wants students to be able to do and to know and/or (2) what the program will do to ensure what students will be able to do and to know.
- **Outcomes** – More detailed and specific statements derived from the objectives; detailed and meaningful enough to guide decisions in program planning and improvement. Deal specifically with what you want students to learn; how you want them to grow and develop as a result of your activities.

### The Assessment Plan

1. Mission
2. Objectives
3. Outcomes
4. Activities
5. Methods
6. Analysis
7. Decisions/  
Recommendations

## Tips for Writing Learning Outcomes

- Think about all that you do and jot down a list of the impacts/learning that you expect to occur.
- Rank those by importance and then start with the top third of that list – there are lots of things we want students to learn from us, but some are primary and some are secondary.
- Do not be concerned about being right/wrong – this is for you.
- Do not be overly concerned with how you will measure your outcomes at the beginning.
- Be sure that it is something you will have a direct impact on – something that can be directly attributed to the intervention/program/interaction that students have with you and your work.
- Keep it simple – use only one concept per outcome.
- Remember – it is a working document, not a final product.

## Questions to Ask as You Write Your Outcomes

- Is it meaningful/valuable?
- Is it manageable?
- Is it measureable/identifiable?
- Who is the target audience of my outcome?
- Is it clear – how will I know if it has been met?
- Will it provide me with evidence that will lead me to make decisions for improvement?



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[http://studentmedia.ncsu.edu/web/uploads/Assessment\\_1314.pdf](http://studentmedia.ncsu.edu/web/uploads/Assessment_1314.pdf)

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Source Survey Questions:

Q1 Your name and title (if applicable) or year/major (if applicable):

Q2 Were the facts you provided the reporter presented accurately and in context?

Yes       No

Q3 If you answered "no" to the previous question, what were the errors?

Q4 Were you quoted accurately and in context?

Yes       No

Q5 If you answered "no" to the previous question, how do you feel you were misquoted?

Q6 Was the reporter professional in his or her interactions with you?

Yes       No

Q7 If you answered "no" to the previous question, in what ways was the reporter unprofessional?

Q8 Did the reporter follow up with you after the initial interview to confirm his or her facts and ask follow-up questions?

Yes       No

Q9 With regard to the article's overall accuracy, clarity and fairness, if you were giving the final version of the story a letter grade, what grade would you give it?

A       A-       B+       B       B-       C+  
 C-       D       F

Q10 Briefly explain why you would give the article that grade.

Q11 Is there anything else we should know about your experience?