

## Writing Course Learning Goals: An Overview of Rationale & Process



*Cycle 1:  
Strengthening Our Programs*

### A Note about Terminology

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Objectives

Outcomes

Goals

#### **Course “Learning Goals”**

A statement in specific, observable terms of what a student will be able to do after completing the course.

#### **Primary Course Learning Goals**

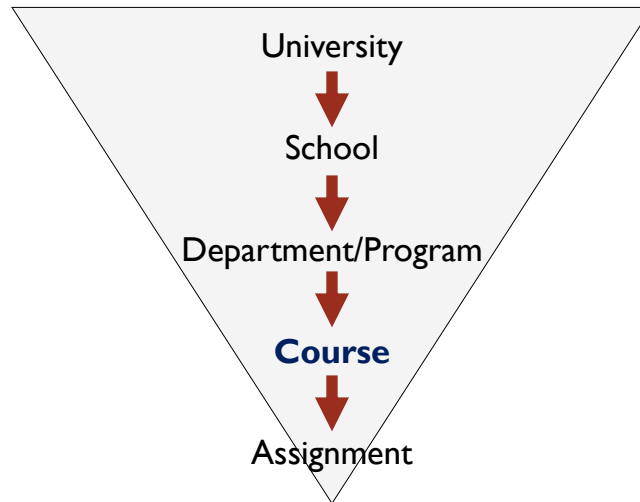
5+ key goals for your course.

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## Learning Goals at All Levels

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## Common Questions

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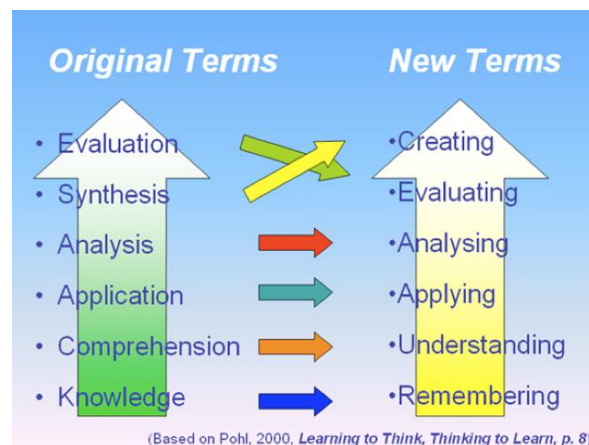
- ▶ How many goals should I have in my course?
- ▶ How specific should my goals be?
- ▶ Are all course goals of equal importance?
- ▶ To what degree must I accomplish a stated goal?

# Benefits of Defining CLGs

- ▶ **Course level benefits:**
  - ▶ Post on syllabus
  - ▶ Aid assignment design
  - ▶ Support instructor/student communication
  - ▶ Grading clarity/consistency
- ▶ **Program level benefits:**
  - ▶ Course and program development
  - ▶ Consistency in multi-section courses
  - ▶ Accreditation (field/university)



# Bloom's Taxonomy/Revised




Original Attribution Unknown.

Found online at [Not.All.Who.Wonder.Are.Lost](http://Not.All.Who.Wonder.Are.Lost) on 15 December 2009

<http://allwhowonder.wordpress.com/2009/04/22/some-thoughts-on-collaboration-higher-level-questioning-skills/>



## Domains/Learning Levels → Action Verbs



<b>Bloom's Revised Taxonomy: Domains into Activities</b>	
<b>Creating</b>	Assemble, Compose, Create, Choreograph, Construct, Design, Devise, Formulate, Generate, Invent, Make, Mix, Plan, Produce, Program, Propose, Set up, Remix
<b>Evaluating</b>	Alpha/Beta Test, Appraise, Assess, Check, Conclude, Convince, Critique, Defend, Detect, Judge, Moderate, Monitor, Predict, Rate, Recommend, Support, Test
<b>Analyzing</b>	Attribute, Classify, Contrast, Compare, Deconstruct, Debate, Deduce, Diagram, Differentiate, Discriminate, Distinguish, Examine, Integrate, Organize, Outline, Relate, Research, Separate, Structure, Tag
<b>Applying</b>	Carry Out, Conduct, Compute, Dramatize, Employ, Execute, Experiment, Give Examples, Investigate, Use, Implement, Interview, Operate, Practice, Predict, Role- Play, Solve, Transfer
<b>Understanding</b>	Associate, Comment, Describe, Differentiate, Discuss, Explain, Express, Extend, Exemplify, Generalize, Illustrate, Interpret, Paraphrase, Predict, Report, Restate, Reword, Summarize, Translate
<b>Remembering</b>	Articulate, Define, Find, Identify, Label, List, Locate, Name, Quote, Recall, Recognize, Reproduce, Retrieve, Recognize (Digitally)

## A Fill-in-the-Blank Drafting Approach

**By the end of this course, students should be able to...**

**[active verb]**

+

**[concept, skill, or attitude]**

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**[purpose, reason, or explanation]**

After completing this course, students will be able to...

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**Verb:** differentiate between  
**Concept:** scholarly and trade articles

**Reason:** to select resources appropriate for varied communication contexts.

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After completing this course, students will be able to

- ▶ Differentiate between scholarly and trade articles to select resources appropriate varied communication contexts.
- 



After completing this course, students will be able to...

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**Verb:** deconstruct  
**Concept:** complex arguments  
**Reason:** so they can respond effectively

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After completing this course, students will be able to

- ▶ Differentiate between scholarly and trade articles to select resources appropriate varied communication contexts.
  - ▶ Deconstruct complex arguments so they can respond effectively.
- 



After completing this course, students will be able to...

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Verb: deconstruct  
 Concept: complex arguments  
 Reason: ~~so they can respond effectively~~

After completing this course, students will be able to

- ▶ Identify scholarly and trade articles for this field to select resources appropriate for academic research contexts.
  - ▶ Deconstruct complex arguments ~~so they can respond effectively~~.
- 
- ▶

After completing this course, students will be able to...

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Verb: deconstruct  
 Concept: complex arguments  
 Reason: ~~so they can respond effectively~~  
 Explanation: and identify common fallacies

After completing this course, students will be able to

- ▶ Identify scholarly and trade articles for this field to select resources appropriate for academic research contexts.
  - ▶ Deconstruct complex arguments and identify common fallacies.
- 
- ▶

## Course Goals for ENGL 201

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After completing this course, students will be able to

- ▶ Identify scholarly and trade articles for this field in order to select resources appropriate for academic research contexts.
- ▶ Deconstruct complex arguments and identify common fallacies.
- ▶
- ▶
- ▶



## Writing Learning Goals

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1. Have a list of learning verbs on hand.  
A list of verbs for Bloom's revised taxonomy is provided.
2. Start with this phrase:  
"After completing this course, students will be able to..."
3. Make a list of behaviors to complete that phrase.
4. Consider your action verb, concept/skill/process, and reasons/explanations.
5. Consider the complexity of each goal. Do you have too much or too little packed in the phrasing?
6. Make sure you'll be able to "see" the skills and outcomes you seek.  
How will you know that students are accomplishing this goal?
7. Reflect, revise, and test again.  
If you're multiple-section/instructor course, then make sure changes are consistent across the group.

