Supplemental Handout

BASICS OF ONLINE COURSE DESIGN
Presented by Instructional Designers Todd Juneau & Thanh Tran

Explore Programs & Guidelines for Online Courses

Recommended Guidelines for UH Online Course
http://www.uh.edu/fdis/resources/teaching-online-uh/

Quality Matters Program - HigherEd rubric located on the right of the webpage.
https://www.qualitymatters.org/qa-resources/rubric-standards/higher-ed-rubric

Blackboard Exemplary Course Program - rubric located at the bottom of the webpage.

Overview of Part 1: Learning Objectives

Learning Objectives - what are they?
Learning objectives are brief statements of what learners are expected to be able to do at the conclusion of instruction. Objectives can be stated both for subdivisions of a course, such as chapters or modules, and for the course as a whole.

Learning objectives can be viewed as bridging the gap between what the learner is able to do before instruction and what the learner is expected to be able to do once instruction is completed.

Example: At the end of this presentation, attendees should be able to describe why learning objectives are important when designing an online course.

Learning Objectives - why are they important?
Properly written learning objectives serve as a guide for the instructor building the course as well as the learner.

Well written objectives help students navigate through the course, have a clear idea of expectations for the course, and help students define what is important.

Learning objectives help instructors select content, develop a teaching strategy, and create tests and other assessments. This enables instructors to ensure they are testing what they are teaching and teaching what they are testing.
Writing Effective Learning Objectives

What does an effective learning objective look like?

**Specific** - the objective is stated in clear, behavioral terms. It is a statement of what the learner should be able to do at the end of a course or module.

**Observable & Measurable** - learners must be able to demonstrate achievement of the objective in a way that can be ascertained by the instructor. Effective learning objectives use “action verbs” such as “describe” or “explain”. It is best to avoid verbs like “understand”, “know” or “appreciate” as they are difficult to observe or measure.

What learning objectives are not...

**Vague or unmeasurable**
Example: *Students will learn the programming language Python.*

Vague - needs to be specific. What exactly will students learn? When?
Example: *At the end of this course, students will gain an appreciation for good communication skills.*

Unmeasurable - appreciation is not measurable. What will be gained?

**A process description or statement of purpose**
Example: *Discuss the ways learning objectives can help instructors.*

While this may be an appropriate goal for a course, it is not a suitable learning objective.

**An activity**
Example: *Students will write an essay on one of the major theories of the cause of glaciation.*

This is an assignment, not a learning objective.

**Sample Verbs for Learning Objectives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Comprehension</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Synthesis</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cite</td>
<td>Describe</td>
<td>Apply</td>
<td>Analyze</td>
<td>Arrange</td>
<td>Appraise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Define</td>
<td>Discuss</td>
<td>Assign</td>
<td>Calculate</td>
<td>Assemble</td>
<td>Assess</td>
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<tr>
<td>Give</td>
<td>Explain</td>
<td>Demonstrate</td>
<td>Compare</td>
<td>Collect</td>
<td>Check</td>
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<tr>
<td>Label</td>
<td>Express</td>
<td>Dramatize</td>
<td>Criticize</td>
<td>Conclude</td>
<td>Compare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List</td>
<td>Identify</td>
<td>Employ</td>
<td>Debate</td>
<td>Construct</td>
<td>Critique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Match</td>
<td>Locate</td>
<td>Illustrate</td>
<td>Diagram</td>
<td>Create</td>
<td>Discriminate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Recognize</td>
<td>Interpret</td>
<td>Differentiate</td>
<td>Design</td>
<td>Estimate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recall</td>
<td>Report</td>
<td>Operate</td>
<td>Distinguish</td>
<td>Determine</td>
<td>Evaluate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Record</td>
<td>Review</td>
<td>Practice</td>
<td>Examine</td>
<td>Diagnose</td>
<td>Grade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relate</td>
<td>Test</td>
<td>Schedule</td>
<td>Experiment</td>
<td>Dissect</td>
<td>Inspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select</td>
<td>Tell</td>
<td>Shop</td>
<td>Inspect</td>
<td>Examine</td>
<td>Judge</td>
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<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Tell</td>
<td>Sketch</td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Formulate</td>
<td>Measure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tell</td>
<td>Write</td>
<td>Use</td>
<td>Solve</td>
<td>Manage</td>
<td>Monitor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: This list includes verbs that are commonly used in learning objectives. The list is not exhaustive and may vary depending on the specific context.
Overview of Part 2: Course Organization

1. **Limit the amount of content presented** (to help students focus on one thing at a time)
   - **Basic**: Chunk content into smaller units (Bb Tools: Content pages, folders, learning modules)
   - **Intermediate**: Set content visibility times (Bb Options: Display options, visibility dates)
   - **Advanced**: Make students visit content one at a time and in a specific order (Bb Tool: Adaptive release)

2. **Make dates predictable** (to help students better anticipate assignments and manage their time)
   - **Basic**: List all assignments and due dates in the syllabus from the start
   - **Intermediate**: Make dates consistent - choose just one or two days of the week and a time of day when something begins and ends
   - **Advanced**: Reiterate assignments and due dates in multiple ways

3. **Have a starting place** (to help orient students to a new environment)
   - **Basic**: Provide the syllabus in a visible area.
   - **Intermediate**: Provide an introduction area. (intro page, folder, module, quiz)
   - **Advanced**: Provide orientation and help materials. (course orientation videos, links)

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Other Resources

**Blackboard Tutorial and Help**

http://www.instruction.uh.edu/knowledgebase/
https://en-us.help.blackboard.com/Learn/Instructor

**CLASS OET Online Readiness Resources** - the resources are also available as a module that can be copied into your Bb course for you to customize. Please contact your college instructional designer if you are interested.

http://www.uh.edu/class/oet/resources/readiness/

**Campus Instructional Designers listing**

http://www.uh.edu/fdis/resources/instructional-designer-teams/

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