

The Syllabus and Learning Outcomes

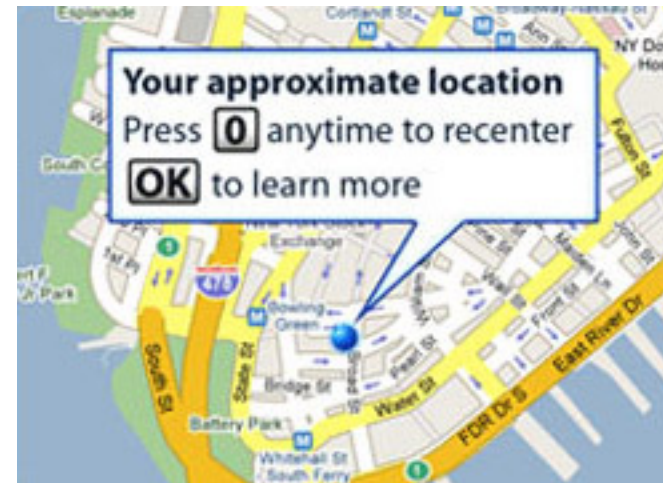
CET: It's Your First Day of Class!

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The Syllabus is....

- **A planning tool**
- **A guide**
- **A roadmap for success** (student and faculty)
- **A communication tool** (course content, requirements, teaching approaches, schedules, expectations and grading/assessment process, clearly defined student learning outcomes, and other details)

The Syllabus is...a planning tool and guide.

- Writing it guides and leads the course development.
- Developing it methodically improves the likelihood of the course working well.
- Understanding the plan of a course engages students in knowing what is expected of them.
- Spelling out specific student learning outcomes guides the plan.

The Syllabus is...a road map.

- Thinking about the **destination** when planning the trip – i.e., the student learning outcomes, “what students will know upon successful completion of the course”... guides the journey!
- Figuring out how the journey unfolds most easily is key. This helps to avoid unnecessary detours and wrong turns.
- The instructor decides what to cover (based on the FIT established course outline), how to cover it, and how one knows if the destination has been reached...by the drivers and the passengers together on the journey!

The Syllabus has guidelines.

- It must include Course Information.
- It must include Instructor Information.

Course Info (all required)	Course name
	Course number/ Section
	Credits and hours
	Prerequisites/Co- requisites
	Meeting days & time
	Room location
	Semester/year/start- end dates
	Holidays/Semester breaks
	Withdrawal deadline
	Angel LMS address
	Name
Instructor Info (all required)	Office location
	Contact (phone & email)
	Web page (if existent)
	Office hours

The Syllabus has guidelines.

- It includes Course Details/Information.
 - Course Description
 - Course Goals/Objectives
 - Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's)
 - Course Calendar/Content Topics
 - Recommended/Required Course Text/other reading materials/other resources

Course Details

Course description

Course goals/objectives

Student learning outcomes

Course calendar/
content/ topics (highly recommended)

Recommended/Required Course text/reading materials/other resources

The syllabus has guidelines.

- It includes Course Details.
 - Departmental attendance policy
 - Course specific policies
 - Grading criteria
 - Academic integrity policy link
 - Other course-specific info, guidelines, & expectations
 - Other related info of interest

Course Details

Departmental attendance policy

Course specific policies

Grading criteria:

- Letter grading by assignment or category
- Percentage distribution
- Assessment value points
- Rubrics with grading values (as applicable)

Academic integrity

Departmental attendance policy

Other course-specific info, guidelines, and expectations

Other info

The Syllabus may strictly follow a template...or not! Content is key!

Standard/ More Traditional Syllabi

- See my handouts
- Check out the CET website: <http://www.fitnyc.edu/10740.asp>
- See Carnegie Mellon University's examples of full syllabi: <http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/designteach/design/syllabus/fullsamples/index.html> - especially Body Politics, Creative Process, Popular Myths, and Cognitive Psychology

Creative Syllabi

- Follow these links from Carnegie Mellon University: <http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/designteach/design/syllabus/samples-creative/index.html>

The Syllabus also may ...

- Establish a contract between the instructor and the students where policies, requirements, and procedures are publicly articulated.
- Show how the course fits into the “big picture” of the major/ degree program/ industry/ one’s life upon graduation.
- Set the tone of the course – what the instructor will do and what the instructor expects students to do.
- Convey the instructor’s enthusiasm for the topics covered.
- Help students assess whether they are in the correct level course.
- Give students on-campus/ outside resources, advice, other sources to help them manage their learning.
- Communicate course goals and content to others (faculty, department, accreditors, etc).

Distribute the Syllabus to students...

- Right away! Do it on the first day of class!
- Review it with them – talk about the key points.
- Understand that the syllabus may need adapting during the semester BUT be fair to students about this. Give them ample warning so that they can plan. Do not change it substantially in process.
- Use the Angel course management system to house your syllabus and other course materials.
- Many students now **expect** this of instructors.
- If you don't know how to use this tool, go – no, **RUN!** - to the CET for help. Also check the Angel tutorials online at <http://www.fitnyc.edu/7881.asp>.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's)

What to ask.

What to include.

How to write them.

Course Objectives vs. SLO's

Course Objectives

- These include the overall goal/s of the course, its broad description, what the instructor will include to help and evaluate how students learn.

Student Learning Outcomes

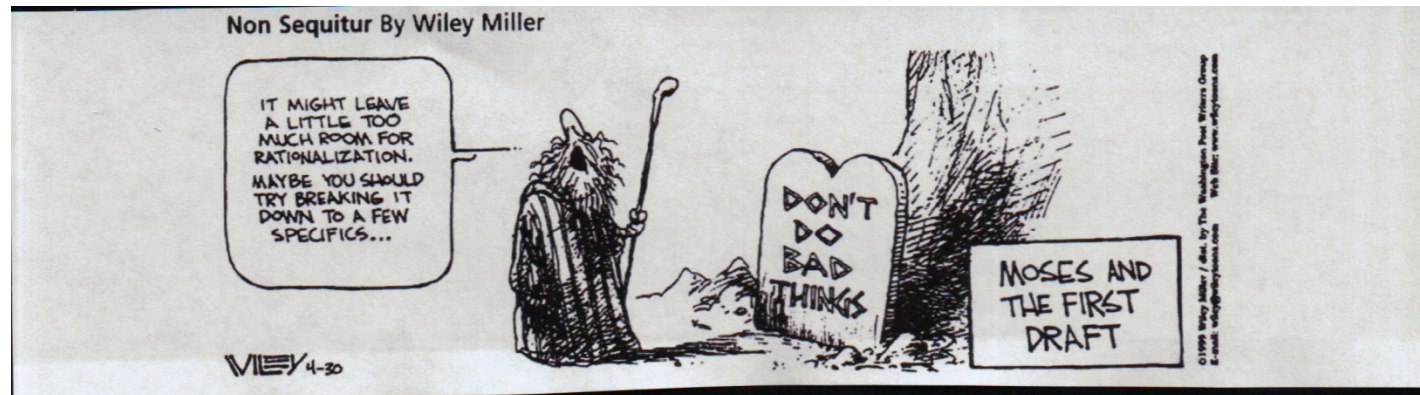
- These include the overall specific RESULTS of what the students will gain from the course, its objectives, and the learning experiences provided.

What is a Student Learning Outcome (SLO)?

- A student learning outcome is a **statement of results**.
- It tells **what the student will be able to do after successfully completing** the course and its instruction.
- To help you determine what to write, say to yourself “**At the end of the course, students will be able to...**” – i.e.; what they will achieve.
- When actually writing them, say “**Students who successfully complete this course will be able to...**” – what the course has enabled them to learn and take away with them.

When writing Student Learning Outcomes, be specific.

Cartoon below from <http://assessment.uconn.edu/docs/HowToWriteObjectivesOutcomes.pdf>



- State the outcome clearly.
- State the outcome simply.
- Be succinct.
- Outcomes guide all teaching, learning, and assessment.

Student Learning Outcomes include 3 parts:

1. A behavior
2. A condition
3. A standard

Student Learning Outcomes...what does behavior have to do with them?

Behavior = a **subject** (student) + an **action verb** (measurable and observable) + an **object** (what the verb acts upon)

Writing Student Learning Outcomes

- Break down the skill. For example, problem solving may require defining the parameters of the problem into multiple parts and various levels of learning.
- Use Bloom's Taxonomy/ Revised Taxonomy for Action verbs and their related level of learning/ intellectual behaviors.
- See CET link:
http://www.fitnyc.edu/files/pdfs/CET_TL_BloomsTaxonomy.pdf
- See Handouts.

Bloom's Taxonomy – New! Active Learning!

- Check this link to Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute's to see a PowerPoint entitled "Mapping Out Learning Outcomes/Objectives" by Zsuzsanna Szabo, Ph. D.
http://provost.rpi.edu/sites/default/files/BloomRevisedTaxonomy_0.pdf

Some examples of SLO's – Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Demonstrate confidence in their abilities to enter into intelligent conversations or discussions about ...xyz.
- Work together with others as both a team member and leader.
- Apply color theory to solve visual communication problems.
- Design and manage a creative project from conception to production within a limited frame of time.
- Critically discuss and evaluate their own work and the work of peers
- Discuss and analyze the judgment behind the related (design) decisions made and the factors that influence them
- Apply the theory and solution techniques learned to solve the problems commonly faced by (production) managers
- Demonstrate the ability to work effectively in a group decision-making context, with an emphasis on understanding alternative perspectives
- See handout for other ideas.

Summary – What makes SLO's beneficial and important?

- They are student centered – students know what to expect and what is expected of them.
- The outcomes are important. Students hold responsibility to learn and instructors hold responsibility to provide appropriate experiences for them to achieve.
- They are measurable. What can students do if they really “understand” or “appreciate” the course learning?
- They are explicit.
- They are one part of the collaborative Three-part Dynamic Cycle of Course Design and Teaching: Assessments and Instructional Activities form the other two parts. Aligning these is an ongoing process.

Bibliography & resources

- Bloom's Taxonomy List of Action Verbs:
<http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/resources/Teaching/CourseDesign/Objectives/BloomsTaxonomyVerbs.pdf>
- Carnegie Mellon University – full syllabi examples:
<http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/designteach/design/syllabus/fullsamples/index.html>
- Carnegie Mellon University - Creative syllabi examples:
<http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/designteach/design/syllabus/samples-creative/index.html>
- Carnegie Mellon College of Fine Arts– samples of learning objectives: <http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/designteach/design/learning-objectives-samples/learningobjectives-cfa.html#CFA4>
- CET at FIT resources on Bloom's Taxonomy, Angel tutorials, Syllabi
 - http://www.fitnyc.edu/files/pdfs/CET_IL_BloomsTaxonomy.pdf
 - <http://www.fitnyc.edu/10740.asp>
 - <http://www.fitnyc.edu/7881.asp>
- Clark, B. (2002). *Growing up gifted: Developing the potential of children at home and at school*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall
- Determining Learning Objectives_: <http://depts.washington.edu/eproject/objectives.htm>
- Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence, Carnegie Mellon University
<http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/principles/index.html>
- Gallaudet University – Student Learning Outcomes http://www.gallaudet.edu/Office_of_Academic_Quality/Assessment_of_Student_Learning_Outcomes/Instructions_and_Examples/Student_Learning_Outcomes.html
- Mapping Out Learning Outcomes http://provost.rpi.edu/sites/default/files/BloomRevisedTaxonomy_0.pdf
- National Association for Geographic Information and Analysis – University of California Santa Barbara
<http://www.ncgia.ucsb.edu/education/curricula/giscc/units/format/outcomes.html>
- Rensselaer Polytechnic University – Learning Outcomes <http://provost.rpi.edu/node/18> and examples of Student Learning Outcomes <http://provost.rpi.edu/sites/default/files/examplesOfLearningOutcomesStatements.doc>
- Solve a Teaching Problem – CMU tool - <http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/solveproblem/index.html>
- University of Connecticut: <http://assessment.uconn.edu/docs/HowToWriteObjectivesOutcomes.pdf>

Thank you!

Contact Assistant Professor Eileen Karp, FIT Fashion Design Department at Eileen_Karp@fitnyc.edu for additional resources and information about this presentation given on August 24, 2011 for the CET at FIT “It’s Your First Day of Class!”