Does Your Online Course Make Sense to Your Students?

Allison Miner
Quality Assurance Manager
The professor was wonderful. Anything he didn’t cover during the course was on the final exam.

~ Anonymous student evaluation
At the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

• Define the principle of alignment.
• Differentiate between a measurable and immeasurable learning objective.
• Appreciate the discipline of nutrition.
Alignment


• A state of agreement or cooperation among persons, groups, nations, etc., with a common cause or viewpoint.
Alignment is critical course components that work together to ensure that students achieve the desired learning outcomes.
Why it matters?

• A course may be fragmented and ineffective.
• Students receive mixed messages about what they should learn.
• Students spend time on activities that do not lead to intended goals.
• Students spend little time on activities that help them meet the intended goals.
• Instructors are frustrated when students do poorly on assessments.
What are critical course components?

- Learning Objectives
- Instructional Activities
- Resources and Materials
- Course Technology
- Assessment and Measure
1. What do you want your students to know at the end of your course or a program?

2. How will you know that your students know what you want them to know?
• Alignment is driven by measurable learning objectives but often:
  1. Learning objectives provided are not being measured.
  2. Instructional activities are not specified in the learning objectives.
  3. The learning objectives are not measurable.
## Writing a Measurable Learning Objective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Condition – given this, than…</td>
<td>Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance – what you will do...</td>
<td>collect and organize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria – what are the terms...</td>
<td>appropriate clinical data such as the history, physical exam, and laboratory assessments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Understand is too broad and actually involves the synthesis of many component skills.

Writing an essay or problem solving may involve many discrete component skills.
Practice proficiency in the discrete component skills.

1. Identify the problem
2. Enlist appropriate evidence
3. Organize a paragraph
Benjamin Bloom's Taxonomy
Learning Objectives

Knowledge
Comprehension
Application
Analysis
Synthesis
Eval.
<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>Identify</td>
<td>Summarizes</td>
<td>Applies</td>
<td>Analyzes</td>
<td>Categorizes</td>
<td>Appraises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show</td>
<td>Explains</td>
<td>Constructs</td>
<td>Compares</td>
<td>Combines</td>
<td>Concludes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Define</td>
<td>Interprets</td>
<td>Manipulates</td>
<td>Contrasts</td>
<td>Reconstruct</td>
<td>Interprets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognize</td>
<td>Describes</td>
<td>Prepares</td>
<td>Illustrates</td>
<td>Revises</td>
<td>Critiques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recall</td>
<td>Compares</td>
<td>Produces</td>
<td>Distinguishes</td>
<td>Writes</td>
<td>Justifies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Demonstrates</td>
<td>Solves</td>
<td>Infers</td>
<td>Creates</td>
<td>Discriminates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Verbs
- Understand
- Appreciate
- Be familiar
- Believe
- Comprehend
- Enjoy
- Know
- Learn
- Master
- Crystalize

### Qualifiers
- Very
- Completely
- Fully
- Totally
- Quickly
The amount of time spent in deliberate practice predicts learning in a given field, rather than generic practice.

“GREAT PRESENTATION.
I HAVEN’T SLEPT THAT WELL IN WEEKS.”
Technology?

- What is the objective?

- How will this help the student achieve the learning objective?
Assessment

Formative
Feedback that is used by the instructor and the students to guide improvements.

- Journaling
- Group projects
- Presentations
- Essays
- Blogging
- Peer evaluation
- Self evaluation
- Quiz

Summative
Success or proficiency that has been obtained at the end of an instructional unit.

- Exam
- Essay
- Group Project
- Presentation
- Art Project
Alignment

• Learner Activities
Resources
Technology
Assessment

Learning Objectives
1. What do I want students to learn after they take my course?

2. How will I know that students know what I want them to know?
At the end of this course:

Course Level Objective
Evaluate the diet of different cultures around the world and their risk for chronic disease.

Module Level Objectives
1. Compare and contrast the nutritional value of your diet to that of peoples around the world.
2. Propose modifications to your eating habits to reduce your risk of developing chronic diseases.
Instructional Activity

- Italy: The Manzo family of Sicily
  - Food expenditure for one week: $24.56 Euros or $606.11
  - Favorite foods: pasta with tomatoes, hot dogs, frozen fish, octopus

- Egypt: The Ahmed family of Cairo
  - Food expenditure for one week: 387.45 Egyptian Pounds or $69.53
  - Family meals: beans and vegetables

- United States: The Bassis family of North Carolina
  - Food expenditure for one week: $32.98
  - Favorite foods: spaghetti, potatoes, sausage, chicken

- Chad: The Ouedraogo family of Dansala Camp
  - Food expenditure for one week: 655 CFA Francs or $1.23
  - Favorite foods: soup with fresh sheep meal

Source: From the book, "Hungry Planet"
Supporting Materials (example)

Resources and Materials

• What the World Eats
• Textbook – Chapter on Nutrition and Chronic Disease Prevention
• PowerPoint slides – Summary of chapter
• Example format provided.

Technology

• Discussion
Summative Assessment

• **Knowledge** - Which diseases are associated with nutrition? Match the nutrient that increases the risk with the disease.

• **Comprehension** - Choose one chronic disease and explain how Americans can lower their risk through nutrition. One point for each different suggestion.

• **Evaluative** - All things being equal, which culture that we studied should have the lowest risk for chronic disease and which culture should have the highest? Explain the reason for each.
EXAM 1
1. Alignment is:
   A. connection between learning objectives, learning activities and assessment
   B. self-guided, self-disciplined thinking which attempts to reason at the highest level of quality in a fair-minded way
   C. Of or pertaining to something that can be known
   D. Capable of being measured
1. Which of the following learning objectives are NOT measurable:

• Know the meaning of critical thinking
• Edit a draft of an essay
• Summarize the plot of a movie
• Appreciate the nuances of subcultures
• Master the art of tango
3. Demonstrate your appreciation for nutrition.
For More Information

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