

# Instructional Objectives

---

## What Are They?

Course Level Student Learning Objectives (SLOs), or Instructional Objectives as they are sometimes called (because they refer to the instruction you will perform in your course), are statements in specific and measurable terms that describe what the learner will know or be able to do as a result of engaging in a learning activity.

Course objectives state what students will be able to do by the end of the course, unit or other period of time. More specific objectives can be written for subsets of the course like units of instruction or chapters of a book.

Program objectives and University Wide Student Learning Objectives state more broad, higher level objectives that cover longer periods of time. For example, a program objective may not be able to be achieved by a student until their third year or perhaps by the time they graduate.

## Why Do I Need Them?

Objectives need to be written in a way that states how you will know when the learner has grasped the knowledge or skill. Well written objectives help define the teaching activities and assessments that will also take place in the course. Objectives are milestones along the way to help ensure students reach their goals.

## How Do I Create Them?

Objectives can be written for all three learning domains (cognitive, psychomotor and affective).

Objectives need four parts: (ABCD)

- **Audience** - Who should be performing the action?
- **Behavior** - What observable and measurable behavior are you looking for?
- **Condition** - Under what conditions will they perform this action?
- **Degree** - What is the standard of acceptable performance? (E.g. How well? How much? How fast?)

Often the conditions or the degree are not specified if they are obvious however they add clarity to the learning objective.

## Sample Objectives

1. Given an irregular verb, the learner will be able to conjugate the verb in the present and past tense.
2. Given the variables and a formula, the learner will be able to correctly solve for the unknown number.
3. Given a piece of sheet music, the learner will be able to label the parts of the piece.
4. Given a patient's history and diagnosis, the learner will be able to construct a physical therapy treatment plan.

Sample verbs

**Cognitive Domain**

Knowledge		Comprehension		Application	
Recall information		Interpret information in one's own words		Use knowledge or generalization in a new situation	
arrange	name	classify	report	apply	operate
define	order	describe	restate	choose	practice
duplicate	recall	discuss	review	demonstrate	prepare
label	relate	explain	select	dramatize	schedule
list	repeat	express	sort	employ	sketch
match	reproduce	identify	tell	illustrate	solve
memorize		indicate	translate	interpret	use
		locate			
Analysis		Synthesis		Evaluation	
Break down knowledge into parts and show relationships among parts		Bring together parts of knowledge to form a whole and build relationships for new situations		Make judgments on basis of given criteria	
analyze	differentiate	arrange	manage	appraise	evaluate
appraise	discriminate	assemble	organize	argue	judge
calculate	distinguish	collect	plan	assess	predict
categorize	examine	compose	prepare	attack	rate
compare	experiment	construct	propose	choose	score
contrast	inventory	create	set up	compare	select
criticize	question	design	synthesize	defend	support
diagram	test	formulate	write	estimate	value

**Affective Domain**

acclaims	cooperates	joins
agrees	defends	offers
argues	disagrees	participates in
assumes	disputes	praises
attempts	engages in	resists
avoids	helps	shares
challenges	is attentive to	volunteers

Adapted from Designing Effective Instruction by Morrison, Ross, Kalman and Kemp