What are they learning?: Assessment in the Classroom

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What is a learning objective?

- Statements that describe specific behaviors a student is expected to demonstrate to assure the stated goal has been achieved; knowledge, skills, and values students should demonstrate upon completion of a course, program, or curriculum
What makes for solid learning objectives?

- Scaffolded
- Measurable
- Clearly articulated and transparent
Scaffolding

1. Determine what students already know (prior knowledge)
2. Set a goal for learning (learning outcomes)
3. Plan instructional supports or how skills/strategies can be broken down
4. Implement lessons and monitor progress (formative assessment/feedback)
5. Fade support over time for students to become independently successful
6. Continue building on content, monitoring, and providing feedback
Building learning objectives with Bloom’s Taxonomy

- **Remember**
  - Recognizing and recalling facts

- **Understand**
  - Understanding what the facts mean

- **Apply**
  - Applying the facts, rules, concepts, and ideas

- **Analyze**
  - Breaking down information into component parts

- **Evaluate**
  - Judging the value of information or ideas

- **Create**
  - Combining parts to make a new whole

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# Verbs for Syllabus Planning

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Start with the end in mind: Backwards design

**Objectives**
- “Enduring” understandings/big ideas
- Identify the desired learning results

**Assessments**
- Determine acceptable evidence

**Activities**
- Plan learning experiences and instruction.

What is assessment?

• Formative
  • Low-stakes
  • Ongoing feedback of student learning
  • Used to improve student learning/understanding
  • Ex: Asking questions, forum discussions, quizzes, one minute papers, think-pair-share

• Summative
  • Higher-stakes (grades)
  • Evaluation of learning at the end of an instructional unit
  • Ex: midterms, final exams, final projects, portfolios
Let’s apply what we’ve learned

Take a few moments to think about a course you teach....

1. Identify and write down three learning objectives for the course.

2. Determine some assessment options (low/high stakes; formative/summative).

3. Design the learning experience.
Think, Pair, Share

Pair up and share out.

Learning objectives
Are your and your partner’s learning objectives clearly articulated? Do they use verbs Bloom’s Taxonomy?

Assessments
Are the assessments in alignment with the learning objectives?

Design
Are the lessons scaffolded? What activities are you using to engage students? Did you consider different modalities of instruction (online versus face to face)?
What do adult learners need?

- Recognize the needs of the adult learner. They want:
  - Meaningful and purposeful learning activities
  - Clear communication of expectations
  - Timely, constructive feedback
  - Timely, relevant resources
  - Approachable instructors
Best practices for teaching adult learners...

• If you are teaching online, actively engage in weekly discussion session.
• If you are teaching face to face, ask questions that prompt participation and reflection.
• Provide timely, constructive feedback – stay positive!
• Consider an “office hour” and set clear expectations for when they can expect email responses.
• Build rapport
• Get creative with assignments and map them to practical applications.
Question & Answer Session

Questions? Concerns?
Thank You

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