STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
Best Practices

Basic Elements of a Student Learning Outcome (SLO)

emphasis on student	*observable, "action" verb*	*learning statement*
1. Students	will identify	three potential career options that are compatible with their skills, values, and interests.
2. Students	will develop	a student expense budget listing expenses and available resources.
3. Students	can explain	at least three of the most important social issues facing the population they served.

Practical Considerations

1. Start Where You Are
   * Use existing program/unit documents as the starting point.
   * Tailor outcomes from other institutions or NASPA/CAS to suit your program/unit.

2. Meaningful & Important
   * Focus on the central aspects of your program/unit and those that are most meaningful and important.
   * Place the emphasis on students–what they will be able to know, or value—not on what services, activities, or information are provided.

3. "Action" Verbs
   * Use verbs that describe the knowledge, skills, and cognitive/developmental changes students should be able to demonstrate because of participation in your program/unit.

4. Be Realistic
   * Keep the learning outcomes to a reasonable number (3-5).
   * Include only those learning outcomes that your program/unit can reasonably and directly address.
   * Avoid jargon; students and others should be able to understand the outcomes.
   * Because all outcomes must be assessed, create outcomes that observable or measureable.

5. Collaborate
   * Collaborative development and collective acceptance of program/unit outcomes provides focus and a common direction for program/unit personnel.

6. Publicize
   * Once outcomes are collaboratively developed and collectively accepted, they need to be shared!

Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom's taxonomy is a well-known description of levels of educational objectives. It may be useful to consider this taxonomy when creating outcomes.

Knowledge	To know specific facts, terms, concepts, principles, or theories
Comprehension	To understand, explain
Application	To apply knowledge to new situations, to solve problems
Analysis	To identify parts, relationships, and organizing principles; To identify the organizational structure of something
Synthesis	To create something, to integrate ideas into a solution, to propose an action plan, to formulate a new classification scheme
Evaluation	To judge the quality of something based on its adequacy, value, logic, or use

"Action" Verbs

Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
cite	arrange	apply	analyze	arrange	appraise
define	classify	carry out	break down	assemble	assess
duplicate	convert	change	calculate	collect	check
find	defend	compute	categorize	combine	choose
identify	describe	construct	compare	compile	compare
indicate	diagram	demonstrate	contrast	compose	conclude
know	discuss	discover	criticize	construct	contrast
label	distinguish	dramatize	debate	create	criticize
list	estimate	employ	deconstruct	design	critique
match	explain	execute	determine	devise	decide
memorize	extend	illustrate	diagram	formulate	discriminate
name	generalize	implement	differentiate	generate	evaluate
outline	give examples	interpret	discriminate	invent	experiment
recall	infer	investigate	distinguish	manage	grade
recognize	locate	manipulate	examine	modify	hypothesize
record	outline	operate	illustrate	perform	interpret
repeat	paraphrase	practice	infer	plan	judge
reproduce	report	predict	inspect	prepare	justify
retrieve	restate	prepare	interrogate	produce	measure
state	review	produce	inventory	propose	rate
underline	suggest	schedule	organize	rearrange	score
	summarize	shop	outline	reconstruct	select
	translate	sketch	question	reorganize	support
		solve	relate	revise	test
		translate			value
		use			
Alternative Headings					
Remembering	*Understanding*	*Applying*	*Analyzing*	*Creating*	*Evaluating*

Adapted from Gronlund, N. E. (1991). *How to write and use instructional objectives* (4th Ed.). New York: Macmillan Publishing Co. and Mary Allen Workshop (May, 2008) UHM