



Bear Bites

Information for Classroom Instruction
School Year 2008 - 2009 - Edition #4

This year, "Bear Bites" will present information on objectives. The following information comes from the January 2009 edition of "Boxes and Arrows" (<http://www.boxesandarrows.com>).

Topic lists and agendas in classrooms are good starting points towards facilitating student learning. However, well-formed learning objectives go a step beyond and offer several advantages for both the teacher and students. While useful, a topic list or class agenda does not make it clear what students should come away with at the end of the class. The learning objectives indicate that the students will need to understand concepts, produce artifacts, and discuss and interpret. These objectives are action-oriented and touch on different levels of learning.

Learning objectives put the focus on the student and learning rather than the teacher and teaching methods.

- What should the students learn? What should be taught?
- What is worth learning? What's worth teaching?
- What is the level (introductory to advanced) of the course?
- What is the length (semester or year) of the course?

Once you have a list of objectives, you need to evaluate their usefulness.

- Keep in mind that the goal of the objective is to list the key competencies.
- Try to develop objectives that are action-oriented and begin with a verb.
- The objectives should help you focus on what you can and should teach and what the students should learn.

Focus on the outcome and not the process.

- State what the students will be able to do, not just what you will teach or how it will be taught.
- Include objectives at all appropriate levels of Bloom's taxonomy: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.
- Verify that the objectives are obtainable for your students.