Formulating Learning Outcomes

What is a student-learning outcome?

A learning outcome is a statement of what a student can expect to attain or achieve as a result of the educational process(es); that is, what do we expect our students to know or be able to do upon completion of a course, sequence of courses, or a program?

◆ The most valuable learning outcomes are the result of **faculty-negotiated agreement** about what students should be able to do or know.

◆ Outcomes must specify an **end result** to be achieved rather than an action (program, process, etc.) to be implemented.
  - Focus on Results-Oriented Outcomes, e.g.: Students will demonstrate the ability to organize and deliver a clear and substantive presentation.
  - Avoid Process Outcomes, e.g.: Students will complete Speech 101.

◆ Program Outcome statements should **identify overarching concepts**, not specific objectives from course syllabi.
  - Focus on Overarching Program Concepts, e.g.: Students will demonstrate the ability to formulate hypotheses, analyze data and draw conclusions.
  - Avoid Focusing on Course Objectives, e.g.: Students in Research Methodology 101 will demonstrate the ability to perform a higher order statistical test.

◆ State learning outcomes using concrete language that describes **measurable** (either qualitatively or quantitatively) actions.
  - Measurable: Students will demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to solve complex business problems in one or more areas of emphasis.
  - Not very measurable: Our objective is to enhance students’ intellectual skills.