

# CHEAT SHEET FOR OBJECTIVES

“What should students know, be able to do, or in what ways should they behave differently after studying this topic?”<sup>1</sup> (Ask yourself this question each time you begin writing an objective.)

WRITING OBJECTIVES		
<b>Objectives are comprised of three essential parts<sup>2</sup>...</b>		
<b>example objective:</b> “Compare the characteristics of a low-mass star and a high-mass star, enumerating at least three characteristics for each type.”		
<b>1. Action verb (behavior):</b> “Compare the”...	<b>2. Content reference:</b> ...”characteristics of a low-mass star and a high-mass star”...	<b>3. Performance standard (criteria):</b> ...”enumerating at least three characteristics for each type.”
<p>Selecting an <b>Action verb</b>: This is the difficult part. Verbs help tie objectives directly to what is going to be assessed. Objectives (verbs) can be sequenced to classify objectives from simple fact learning to more complex levels of learning [Bloom’s taxonomy]. Given this, it is often useful to select verbs that can be applied to the levels in the Cognitive Domain (Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation).</p> <p><b>Knowledge:</b> Recall, identify, recognize, acquire, distinguish, state, define, name, list, label, reproduce, order</p> <p><b>Comprehension:</b> Translate, extrapolate, convert, interpret, abstract, transform, select, indicate, illustrate, represent, formulate, explain, classify</p> <p><b>Application:</b> Apply, sequence, carry out, solve, prepare, operate, generalize, plan, repair, explain, predict, demonstrate, instruct, compute, use, perform, implement, employ, solve</p> <p><b>Analysis:</b> Analyze, estimate, compare, observe, detect, classify, discover, discriminate, explore, distinguish, catalog, investigate, breakdown, order, determine, differentiate, dissect, contrast, examine, interpret</p> <p><b>Synthesis:</b> Write, plan, integrate, formulate, propose, specify, produce, organize, theorize, design, build, systematize, combine, summarize, restate, argue, discuss, derive, relate, generalize, conclude, produce</p> <p><b>Evaluation:</b> Evaluate, verify, assess, test, judge, rank, measure, appraise, select, check, judge, justify, evaluate, determine, support, defend, criticize, weigh, assess<sup>3</sup></p>		

<sup>1</sup> Jerrold Kemp on Learning Objectives, “Instructional Design: A Plan for Unit & Course Development”, Fearon Publishers, 1971

<sup>2</sup> A “condition” might also be included in an objective. A condition tells you where, when, and how an action should be performed.

If a particular *condition* should be met for a grade to be awarded, then that condition should also be included in the objective.

<sup>3</sup> List from “Writing Quality Learning Objectives” (<http://www.park.edu/cetl/quicktips/writinglearningobj.html>), Park University Center for Teaching & Learning Excellence

## Definitions

**Course Objectives:** Usually derived from main course topics. Course objectives tend to be broader than “module objectives”. Each course module (or “unit of instruction”) would strive to meet a “course objective”. Should be written in measurable terms. *Also known as primary objectives or terminal objectives.*

**Module Objectives:** Objectives that are “sub-objectives” for each course objective. Each module objective would represent a single learning step that would enable the learning required in order to [help] achieve a course objective. Should be written in measurable terms. *Also known as unit objectives, secondary objectives, or enabling objectives.*

## Additional Help

A few notes regarding objectives...

- When designing a course for the first time, detailed objectives might be difficult to enumerate because course content may not be clear. In many cases, a course designer may finalize detailed objectives as they go.
- Objectives should be understood the same by the instructor and student.
- Some parts of an objective may be inferred or “known” by the person reading the objective (instructor, student...), in which case they can be left out of the objective statement. But keep in mind that if there is anything that should be met in order for a grade to be awarded, then it should be included in the objective. Objectives should be *unambiguous*.
- For additional help in writing objectives see <http://www.park.edu/cetl/quicktips/writinglearningobj.html>

## CHEAT SHEET FOR CONTENT, ACTIVITIES, AND ASSESSMENTS

<b>C</b> ontent	<b>A</b> ssessments	<b>LA</b> Learning Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lecture</li><li>• Readings</li><li>• Media</li><li>• Digital and Printed Handouts</li><li>• Forms</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Self-Tests and Practice Tests</li><li>• Peer Assessment</li><li>• Formal Formative (Example: Mid-term Exams)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Skill Development</li><li>• Problem-Solving</li><li>• Case Study</li><li>• Role Play</li><li>• Simulation/ Tutorial</li><li>• Debate/Discussion</li></ul>