Writing Behavioral Objectives
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Behavioral objectives, unlike content (course) objectives are more amenable to evaluation. They are statements that describe the behavior the student (you 😊) is expected to exhibit as a result of one or more learning experiences. Emphasis on behavior means that evaluation is concerned with what you DO, rather than on what material (content) is covered.

The identification of behavior as the critical variable in the evaluation process arises from the concept of the learning process. Learning is described as a change in behavior as a result of experiencing. Thus, selection of behaviors appropriate to a learning situation and their statement in measurable terms give direction to the learner's experiences and become the object of student evaluation.

Behavioral objectives serve as a vital source of communication to all involved. Behavioral objectives offer students the opportunity to become self-directing; when goals are clear, you can direct your own endeavors toward activities that help you achieve these goals.

Guidelines for writing personal objectives:
1. A behavioral term is one this is observable and measurable.
2. A behavioral objective expresses the intended outcome, not outcomes, i.e., be singular—an objective should focus on one and only one aspect of behavior.

Incorrect: Learn how to read an EKG.
Correct: Identify EKG abnormalities of selected diseases.

Incorrect: The nursing student identifies and analyzes phenomena in the patient’s environment that influence his ability to adapt to limitations imposed by his illness.
Correct: The nursing student analyzes phenomena in the patient’s environment that influence his ability to adapt to limitations imposed by his illness.

3. Be concise—at most, objectives should be one or two sentences in length.
4. Do NOT include the method in the statement of the objective. This places a severe limitation on the learner as well as the evaluator—states that there is only one way you can learn a particular behavior. When you find yourself ready to use words such as through or by □. . . STOP.

Incorrect: The nursing student demonstrates collaborative skills through maintenance of effective interpersonal interactions.
5. Describe expected behavior—an objective should indicate the desired end product.

Be realistic—an objective should focus on observable behavior, not your illusions or delusions of grandiosity.

6. Use definite terms—terms such as “define,” “list,” “compare” have definite meaning, whereas terms such as “know,” and understand” have a multitude of meanings.

A system for ordering behaviors within the context of development is the taxonomy of education objectives developed by Bloom, Krathwohl, and colleagues. A taxonomy is a classification system that specifies the desired outcomes of an instructional endeavor. (Do see the newest version, click on the link below.)

Learning behavior is manifested in three ways; (a) cognitive, the intellectual ability; (b) affective, the states of feeling, valuing; and (c) psychomotor, the manipulative and motor skills. The three domains—cognitive, affective & psychomotor—represent a broad classification of human behavior.

Incorrect: To know how to do a head-to-toe assessment.
Correct: To be able to demonstrate the correct procedure for a head-to-toe assessment.

Evaluation: process concerned with determining the quality of a substance, action, or event. Summative evaluation occurs at the end of a program, course, or unit and refers to the extent to which the learner has realized all of specified behavioral objectives. Formative evaluation occurs throughout the program, course, and unit, and refers to the learner's progress toward realizing behavioral objectives.
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**Remembering**: can the student recall or remember the information? define, duplicate, list, memorize, recall, repeat, reproduce state

**Understanding**: can the student explain ideas or concepts? classify, describe, discuss, explain, identify, locate, recognize, report, select, translate, paraphrase

**Applying**: can the student use the information in a new way? choose, demonstrate, dramatize, employ, illustrate, interpret, operate, schedule, sketch, solve, use, write.

**Analyzing**: can the student distinguish between the different parts? appraise, compare, contrast, criticize, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, examine, experiment, question, test.

**Evaluating**: can the student justify a stand or decision? appraise, argue, defend, judge, select, support, value, evaluate

**Creating**: can the student create new product or point of view? assemble, construct, create, design, develop, formulate, write.

From: [http://www.odu.edu/educ/roverbau/Bloom/blooms_taxonomy.htm](http://www.odu.edu/educ/roverbau/Bloom/blooms_taxonomy.htm)

**References**
