



PennState

SCHREYER INSTITUTE FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

Course Outline Template

Course outlines provide an overview of a course to ensure that all of the required or desired elements are present and that course goals, objectives, topics, assessments, and instructional activities are aligned. They also assist with organizing content into coherent modules and with planning the sequencing, timing, and outlining of individual class sessions. The template below can be used to design courses at any level of attainment, in any modality, for any length time. It can be expanded or contracted for any number of topics. Ideally, each topic should be associated with at least one learning objective, although a single learning objective can be associated with multiple topics. The following definitions apply to the table headings below.

Definitions

Course Goals

According to [Faculty Senate Policy 43-00](#), “Course Goals are broad educational benchmarks describing general understanding and knowledge domains in each course.” E.g., Students will demonstrate caring behaviors as part of a daily nursing routine.

Course Learning Objectives

Again according to [Faculty Senate Policy 43-00](#), “Course Objectives are more specific, should map to broader course goals, and represent unique, focused skill sets with learning outcomes that are assessable.” E.g., Students will listen to patients’ concerns and respond with explanations that are appropriate and medically accurate. Each course topic should have at least one corresponding learning objective that is *demonstrable, observable, measurable* and requires an *action*. For examples, see [Bloom's Taxonomy Active Verbs](#).

Course Topics

Knowledge and skill sets that students will learn in the course. E.g., Educating patients on how to manage their conditions.

Summative Assessments

Essays, exams, projects, performances, reports, demonstrations, products, etc. E.g., Exams, clinical summaries, patient records, discharge plans.

Formative Assessments

Discussions, reading or comprehension checks, admit/exit slips, group activities, one-minute papers, quizzes, practice tests, etc.

Instructional Activities

Lectures, in-class activities, pre-class activities, and homework. The typical distribution is approximately one-third in-class and two-thirds out-of-class activities per course ([Faculty Senate Policy 42-23](#)). E.g., Lectures, readings, videos, case studies, simulations, worksheets, etc.

Course Outline

Course Learning Objectives	Course Topics	Summative Assessments	Formative Assessments	Instructional Activities

