

EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Expected Learning Outcome (definition)

An expected learning outcome is a formal statement of what students are expected to learn in a course. Expected learning outcome statements refer to specific knowledge, practical skills, areas of professional development, attitudes, higher-order thinking skills, etc. that faculty members expect students to develop, learn, or master during a course (Suskie, 2004). Expected learning outcomes are also often referred to as “learning outcomes”, “student learning outcomes”, or “learning outcome statements”.

Simply stated, expected learning outcome statements describe:

1. What faculty members want students to know at the end of the course *AND*
2. What faculty members want students to be able to do at the end of the course.

Learning outcomes have three major characteristics

1. They specify an action by the students/learners that is **observable**
2. They specify an action by the students/learners that is **measurable**
3. They specify an action that is done by the **students/learners** (rather than the faculty members)

Effectively developed expected learning outcome statements should possess all three of these characteristics. When this is done, the expected learning outcomes for a course are designed so that they can be assessed (Suskie, 2004).