

Assessment 101:

The Basics of Writing Learning Outcomes

WE'RE HERE TO
MAKE YOU AN
EXPERT

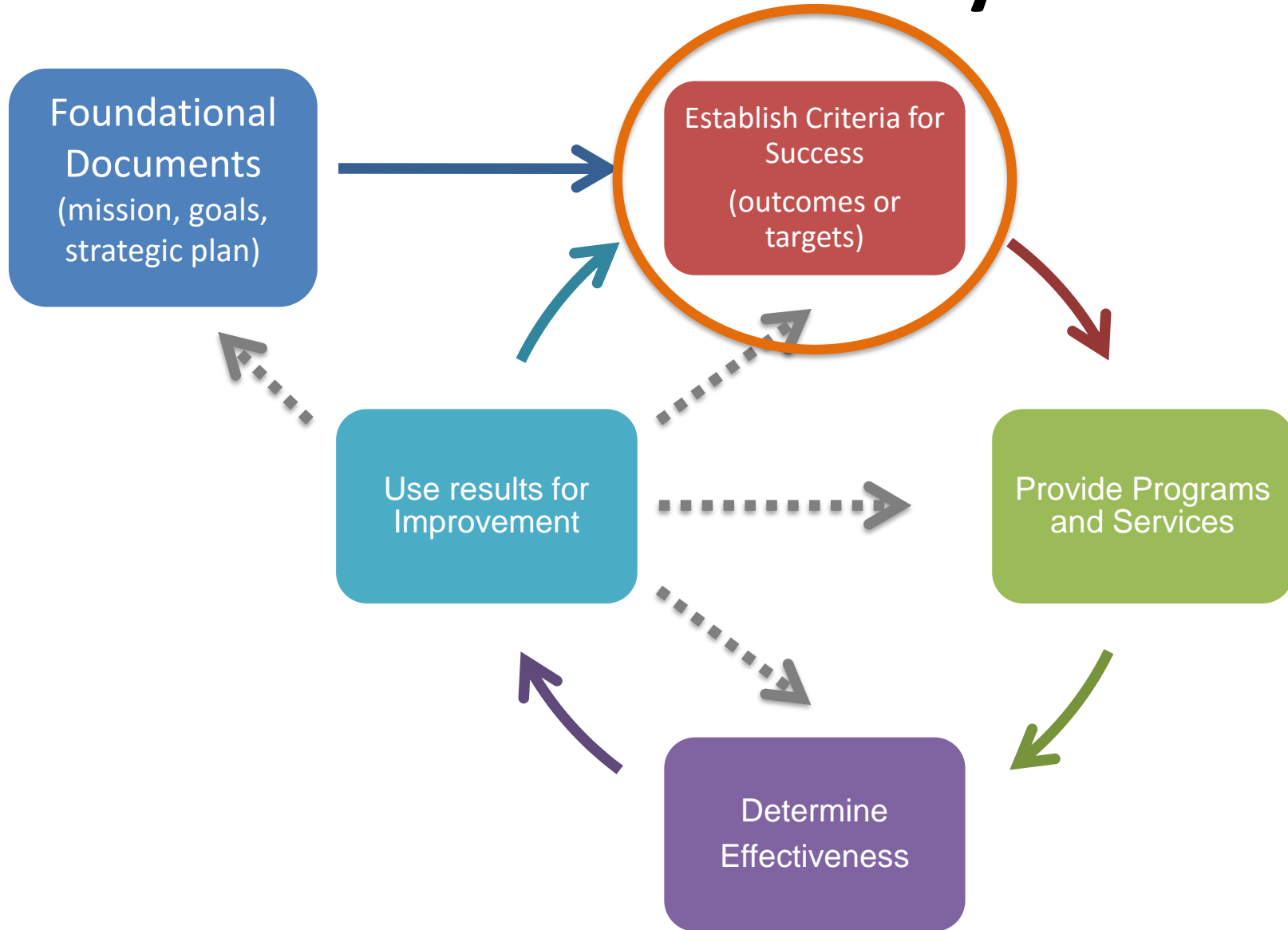


Outcomes for the session

After attending this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Restate the difference between a goal and a learning outcome**
- Describe what makes an outcome measurable**
- Create 1 learning outcome based on a project idea**
- Correctly identify the ABCD method**

Focus on the assessment cycle



Questions We Need to Ask Ourselves

What are we trying to do and why?

What is our department and its programs trying to accomplish?

How well are we doing what we want to accomplish?

How do we know?

Connecting to the bigger picture

College or University mission/goals



Division **mission**



Division/departamental **goals**



Division/departamental **objectives**



Outcomes for students and programs

Definition of Terms

A **goal** is an end result written in broad terms

*Students will become acquainted with
topographic maps and their usage*

Definition of Terms

A **learning outcome** examines cognitive skills that students (or other stakeholders) develop through department interactions; measurable, transferable skill development.

Statements indicating what a participant (usually students) will **know, think, or be able to do** as a result of an event, activity, program, etc.

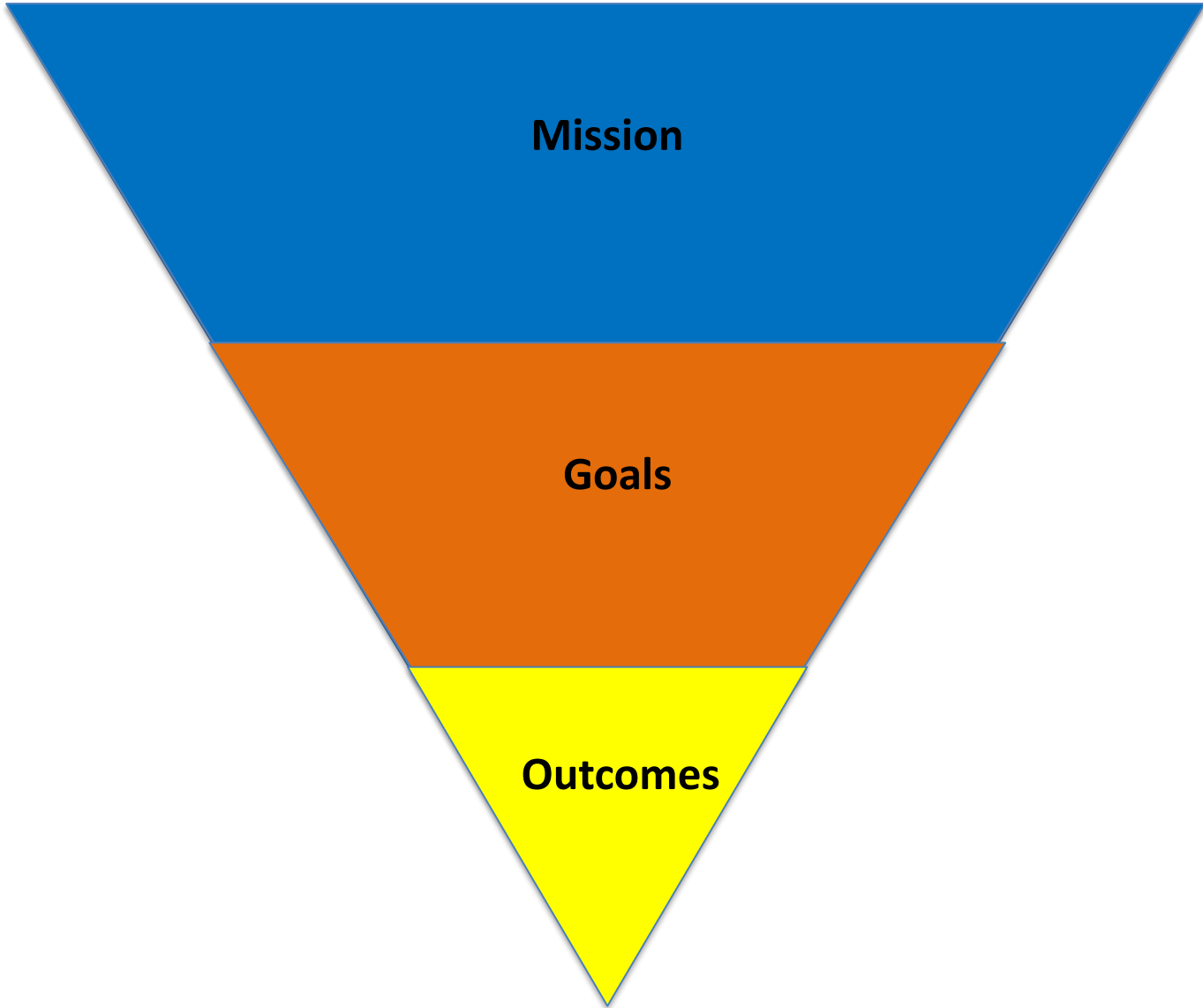
Needs to be **specific and measurable!**

Definition of Terms

Learning Outcome

Students should be able to locate and identify features on topographic maps by latitude and longitude.

Broad



Mission

Goals

Outcomes

Narrow

ABCD Structure of a Learning Outcome

(Heinich, et al, 1996)

Audience/Who

- Who does the outcome pertain to?

Behavior/What

- What do you expect the audience to know/be able to do?

Condition/How

- Under what conditions or circumstances will the learning occur?

Degree/How much

- How much will be accomplished, how well will **the behavior** need to be performed, and to what level?

Learning Outcome Statement:

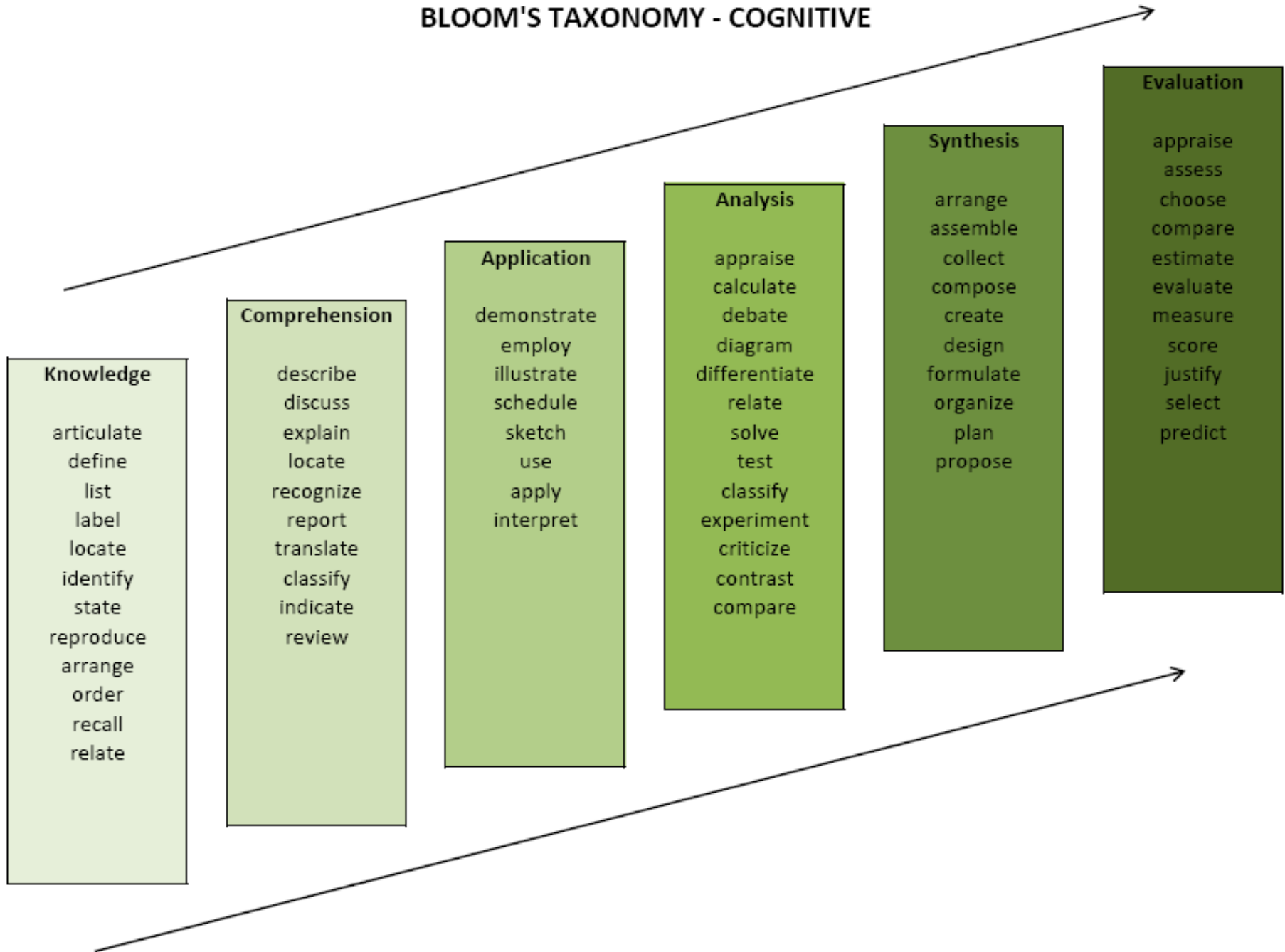
A - Students will ...

B - <learn what>

C - <under these circumstances / conditions>

D - <to this level of efficiency / effectiveness>

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY - COGNITIVE



Learning outcome examples

1. After attending a financial aid session, **students** will be able to accurately fill out the FAFSA form.
2. As a result of three meetings with an academic coach, **students** will be able to compare study strategies that is appropriate for their learning style.
3. After participating in a leadership retreat, **organization presidents** will be able to differentiate between tasks to complete themselves versus those to delegate to their executive board before their first spring semester planning meeting.

The 3 M's of learning outcomes

Meaningful

- How does the outcome support the departmental mission or goal?

Manageable

- What is needed to foster the achievement of the outcome? Is the outcome realistic?

Measurable

- How will you know if the outcome is achieved? What will be the assessment method?

Beware of these common challenges

- Too vast/complex, too wordy
- Multiple outcomes in one learning outcome statement **(the word “and” is usually your first clue!)**
- Not specific enough (e.g., effective communication skills)
- Not measurable
- Describe program outcomes, rather than learning outcomes



Watch Out For Verbs That Aren't Measurable!

Words to Avoid

Realize

Believe

Comprehend

Conceptualize

Self Actualize

Phrases To Avoid

Awareness of

Comprehension of

Capable of

Interest in...

Knowledge of...

Understanding of..

Improve it!

Students will improve their communication skills.

Students will identify **two** strategies for facilitation in the classroom after attending the Communication Skills for Educators session.

Audience, Behavior, Condition, Degree

Improve it!

Students and parents will know what kinds of career services exist on campus after orientation.

Students and parents will be able to list three career exploration services available at the Career Center after participating in the Career Center session at Orientation.

Audience, Behavior, Condition, Degree

All assessment
Is a perpetual work in progress

-Linda Suskie

THANK YOU!



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