THE SYLLABUS: DOCUMENTED JOURNEY TO SUCCESS

GOALS

1. Provide a printed learning directive (syllabus) that is systematically congruent with the learning taxonomy domains (cognitive, psychomotor, affective), scientific nursing theories and behaviors, nursing process, nursing diagnoses, and critical thinking.
2. Provide a guide for nursing instructors and organizations to ensure accurate and complete course content coverage.
3. Provide nursing students a complete, accurate, progressive, and integration of nursing course content.
4. Provide organizations with recommendations for a printed, systematically congruent job description directive (syllabus).

KEYWORDS FOR APPLICATION

1. Syllabus/Syllabi
2. Standards
3. Philosophy
4. Goal(s)
5. Purpose
6. Objective(s)
7. Critical Thinking
8. Nursing Process (ADPIE)
9. Nursing Diagnosis
10. Bloom's Taxonomy
11. Cognitive Domain
12. Psychomotor Domain
13. Affective Domain
14. Communication
15. Feynman Learning Technique
16. Management vs. Leadership
17. Nursing Brain Sheets/Nursing Think Notes

VARIED USE OF A SYLLABUS (THE ALL-AROUND MESSAGE OF REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESS)

The syllabus format is used in various situations of learning. Educational programs use it to guide teaching. Organizations use it to introduce and re-educate employees to the organization's job expectations during job orientation and as an organized way to present in-services. The format forces careful considerations by the presenter to prepare and explain requirements. It leaves little room for a student/employee to misinterpret how to succeed in course or job performance. The outcome causes a lessening of eventual legal concerns related to communicating the course of study's expectations or job performance requirements.

FEYNMAN LEARNING TECHNIQUE (ATTEMPT TO SIMPLIFY DIFFICULT CONCEPTS)

Creating a syllabus is much like placing the bricks on the yellow brick road. In the Wizard of Oz, Dorothy found her way and was directed to "follow the yellow brick road." So--let us get started on our way down this road to success by helping students and organizations obtain their ultimate goal(s). It means developing and following learning objectives or job expectations to attain the goal(s).

The Feynman Learning Technique says that any fool can make things bigger, more complex. It takes a touch of genius—and courage—to move in the opposite direction to make things more understandable. The syllabus makes learning and sharing of information more understandable.

The four steps of the Feynman Learning Technique to be used in developing and teaching from a prepared syllabus are:

1. Pretend you are going to teach a concept to a student in the sixth grade.

2. Identify gaps in your explanation and presentation. Go back (again) to the source material to better understand exactly the basics of what you should teach.

3. Organize and simplify your oral and written presentations.

4. Transmit your organized information.

GENERAL SYLLABI STANDARDS

A standard (related to a syllabus) establishes the intellectual and basic understanding of a syllabus. Basic standards and content are:

PHILOSOPHY: We believe that the art of teaching or identifying a job expectation is best taught by faculty/administrators preparing and sharing in print a syllabus with students/employees showing a logical flow of taxonomy domains with related categories, associated verbs, required learning activities, and means of testing outcomes.

DEFINITION: A syllabus is a printed outline of learning objectives or job-related expectations related to taxonomy domains, domain categories, associated category verbs, related learning activities, and methods that confirm the degree of course success.

GOAL/MISSION/PURPOSE: To incrementally present in print to a student/employee a logical flow of informational course objectives/job description content, relevant learning experiences, and testing methods that will result in learning success.

FREQUENCY OF EXPECTATION – THE AT-LEAST STANDARD

Every learning objective or job description behavior has an acceptable frequency. When writing course or job description expectations, the author must determine to what extent or frequency the learning or behavior must occur to substantiate understanding or prove accomplishment. Suppose a learning objective or job description behavior has not stated a minimum frequency expectation (acceptable occurrence times). In that case, the inference is that it must occur all of the time. If there is a minimum frequency that is acceptable, state the minimum amount. Should an emphasis on an expectation need to be noted, add to the learning objective or job description expectation the words, "All the time." The frequency statement identifies and clarifies exactly the minimum acceptable standard.

Making a written expectation (learning objective or job description behavior) could have expectations that *need to* or that *need not* to occur all of the time. It is often best to state an At-Least Standard (when possible) for clarity and help alleviate unforeseen circumstances that could cause non-attainment of the learning objective or job expectation. Transparency always helps a person meet expectations. Always say what you mean and mean what you say!

A syllabus or job description is written in words explaining what to do or what is to occur. It is a description of <u>expected</u> and <u>positive</u> behaviors.

EXAMPLES

No minimum and inferred At-Least Standard: Attend conference meetings.

Stated minimum At-Least Standard: Attend conference meetings at least 75% of the time.

Statement of emphasis: Attend conference meetings all of the time.

MANAGEMENT VERSUS LEADERSHIP

A syllabus is intended to be a MANAGEMENT tool, meaning it *informs* students/employees what is required or what they are to do. The syllabus is NOT usually a leadership tool, meaning that leadership *involves* the students/employees in determining their expectations or behaviors.

A syllabus might involve LEADERSHIP when a person or group needs (or is allowed) to develop a syllabus. Leadership might occur when a new organizational job or clarification of a position occurs or information is invited from others regarding what a job involves.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES VERSUS GOALS

Learning objectives are always *incremental steps* toward a goal(s). A goal(s) is an *end-point or terminal desire/behavior*. There is an obvious difference. The two words (objectives/goals) are often used interchangeably—however, incorrectly!

Each learning objective on a syllabus is represented first by a taxonomy domain (cognitive, psychomotor, or affective), followed by the selected domain category (indicating the learning objective's complexity). Then, the category is followed by a verb from the chosen domain category. The syllabus goal(s) for the course or job description is a one-time statement to be placed on the syllabus's informational first page.

BENJAMIN BLOOM'S TAXONOMY DOMAINS, CATEGORY, AND VERBS FOR EDUCATIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS

In the 1950s, Benjamin Bloom's taxonomy was adopted by educators to understand the different categories and complexities of learning. The concept involves three domains (three actions that influence thought and behavior). The following three domains are the most used in academic and organizational settings.

The three domains are:

1) Cognitive (**K**nowledge)

2) Psychomotor (**S**kills)

3) Affective (**A**ttitude)

They are known collectively as the "KSA" domains. A selected domain is the first word of each learning objective in the first column of the syllabus. After identifying the selected *domain*, an appropriate *category* of the domain is determined. Following is a verb from the chosen category. (domain—category—selected verb)

As the course progresses, the selected taxonomy domains change according to the author's desire and the categories progress to indicate increased difficulty of the expected learning or job expectation usually, the cognitive domain comprises the first domain to be addressed (maybe several times) because it promotes and requires intellectual understanding of the content before requiring performance.

Again--Following each selected domain is a domain category. The domain category determines the degree of *simplicity or complexity*. Usually, the first domain *category* to be addressed is the first (simplest) and then progresses to more complicated categories. This promotes a progression of understanding from simple to more complex. Then, the verb used to start each learning objective statement/job description is selected from the domain category being addressed.

Example: Cognitive—Understand—Explain------

Note that the *categories* under each domain go from simple to complex as the course of study/job description progresses. The expected behaviors related to the domain, category, and selected verb follow directly across the page, horizontally, on the syllabus.

Consider turning the paper side-ways/landscape. A regular size paper or legal-size paper may be used.

DOMAIN CATEGORY CHOICES— (SIMPLE TO COMPLEX)

COGNITIVE-- FIVE SIMPLE TO COMPLEX (KNOWLEDGE, THINKING) DOMAIN <u>CATEGORIES</u> AND <u>POSSIBLE VERBS</u> PER CATEGORY

<u>Remember</u>---(Related to the ability to recall or retrieve previously learned information). Possible verbs: Define, Describe, Identify, Know, List, Name, Outline, Recall, Recognize, Reproduce, Select, State

<u>Understand</u>---(Comprehending the meaning and interpretation of instructions and problems). Possible verbs: Comprehend, Distinguish, Estimate, Explain, Generalize, Give an example, Interpret, Summarize, Translate

<u>Apply</u>---(Use a concept in a new situation in the workplace). Possible verbs: Apply, Change, Compute, Demonstrate, Manipulate, Prepare, Relate, Show, Solve, Use, Assess, Plan

<u>Analyze</u>---(Separates material into component parts to increase understanding). Possible verbs: Analyze, Compare, Contrast, Differentiate, Distinguish, Identify, Relate, Separate, Diagram, Outline, Diagnose

<u>Evaluate</u>---(Make a judgment about the value of ideas or materials). Possible verbs: Appraise, Compare, Contrast, Defend, Describe, Discriminate, Evaluate, Explain, Relate, Summarize, Support

PSYCHOMOTOR--SEVEN SIMPLE TO COMPLEX (PHYSICAL) DOMAIN <u>CATEGORIES</u> AND <u>POSSIBLE VERBS</u> PER CATEGORY

<u>Perception</u>---(Guide to sensory-motor activity). Possible verbs: Hear, Listen, Detect, Perceive, Recognize, Observe, Listen, Sense, Watch

<u>Set</u>--- (Act according to mental, emotional, and physical readiness). Possible verbs: Position, Place, Sit, Stand, Assume, Achieve, Establish

<u>Guided Response</u>---(Imitate and practice skills, often in approved steps as a beginning to learn complex skills). Possible verbs: Operate, Supervise, Repeat, Imitate, Copy, Duplicate, Manipulate, Practice, Repeat, Try

<u>Mechanism</u>---(Develop basic proficiency, confidence, and efficiency). Possible verbs: Demonstrate, Execute, Make, Produce, Show, Improve, Conduct, Increase, Show

Complex Complete Overt Response---(Perform automatically with advanced skill). Possible verbs: Act, Manage, Perform, Guide, Excel, Control, Perfect, Organize, Master, Maintain

Adaptation---(Adapt to meet a problem situation). Possible verbs: Adapt, Alter, Change, Reorganize, Revise

New Pattern Creation---(Change and create according to the situation). Possible verbs: Compose, Construct, Design, Combine, Develop

AFFECTIVE--FIVE SIMPLE TO COMPLEX (FEELING, ATTITUDES) DOMAIN <u>CATEGORIES</u> AND <u>POSSIBLE VERBS</u> PER CATEGORY

Receiving--- (Attend to stimuli selectively). Possible verbs: Listen, Tolerate, Acknowledge, Accept, Notice

Responding---(Respond to stimuli). Possible verbs: Follow, Participate, Respond, Volunteer, Conform, Communicate, Assist, Obey, Consent

Valuing---(Attach value or worth to something). Possible verbs: Commit, Initiate, Seek, Show desire, Exhibit loyalty, Choose, Show concern

Organization---(Conceptualizes value and resolves conflicts). Possible verbs: Adjust, Arrange, Rank, Theorize, Organize, Conceptualize, Classify, Group, Formulate

Internalizing---(Integrates value into a value system that controls behavior). Possible verbs: Exemplify, Maintain, Support, Serve, Defend, Justify, Influence

<u>EXAMPLES</u>

Cognitive—Understand--Explain the difference between the nursing process and nursing diagnosis.

Psychomotor—Adaptation—Reorganize items in the following list that represent the nursing process.

Affective—Responding—Assist in selecting surgical equipment.

EMPLOYEE JOB DESCRIPTION SYLLABUS (INSTEAD OF STUDENT SYLLABUS)

Now that you (as an administrator) know the basic logistics of syllabus preparation----Prepare the first introductory page of the syllabus with the information you deem important, instead of the example found herein.

When writing a specific job description syllabus, state the domain (cognitive, psychomotor, affective) and, then, the expected highest category of performance. Selected the chosen verb from that category to start writing the expected behavior--instead of incrementally moving from a simple to more complex category as in a student syllabus.

Change the vertical column titles at the top of the syllabus in keeping with job expectations, support, and other expectations. Consider titles across the top to be:

"Job Expectations" instead of "Learning Objectives."
"Human/Department Resources" instead of "Lecture Content."
"Reading/Policy Resources," instead of "Reading Assignment."
"Performance Attainment," instead of "Evaluation/Test."
 "Comments/Other." (Remains the same).

This management tool is flexible regarding its content and is intended to generate appropriate administrative outcomes to benefit an organization and the employee.

NURSING COURSE SYLLABUS (INSTEAD OF JOB DESCRIPTION SYLLABUS)

Now that you (as a nursing instructor) know the basic logistics of syllabus preparation----Prepare the first introductory page of the syllabus with the same (or similar) information as the example found herein.

Maintain the vertical column titles at the top of the syllabus in keeping with a course of study—as seen in the example.

When developing a specific course of study syllabus, state the domain (cognitive, psychomotor, affective) and, then, select a category in the selected domain which progresses from simple to more complex categories. Lastly, use a verb from the selected category to commence each learning objective.

Incorporate the following in the nursing syllabus---

Nursing Process: The nursing process consists of Assessment, Diagnosis, Planning, Intervention, and Evaluation (ADPIE).   The nursing process of Assessment, Diagnosis, Planning, and Evaluation is often in the cognitive (knowledge and thinking) domain of Benjamin Bloom's Taxonomy. Intervention (the fourth nursing process category and before Evaluation) is often in the psychomotor (doing) domain.

Nursing Diagnosis: The three nursing diagnosis components are Defining a Problem, Identifying Risk Factors, and Defining Characteristics of Risk Factors.

Critical Thinking: Critical thinking is accomplished during the entire nursing process to form a clinical objective evaluation and judgment. The Nursing Brain Sheets assists in organized critical thinking.

A syllabus is prepared by the course instructor and presented to each student at the start of the course.

THE FIRST PAGE OF GENERAL INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTION FOR A NURSING STUDENT SYLLABUS

The following order of the first page content for a nursing syllabus is in this order. Also, notice the "standards" used to explain the course thoroughly as to what the syllabus represents. The instructor might choose to list the information differently; however, this information (which includes standards) must be present on the syllabus's first page.

Name of the college, university, organization, etc.
Name of the nursing program or organization
Time (semester/quarter/time period) and year
Name of the course number/department and title
Room number and time/area of employment
Instructor name, credentials
Instructor availability
Course Grade Determinants
Audio Recording Permission
Philosophy of the Course
Goal of the Course
Purpose of the Course
Objectives of the Course (In the Learning Column of the Syllabus

GREAT AMERICAN COLLEGE OF THE SCIENCE OF NURSING
SPRING SEMESTER, 2015
N454: THE SCIENCE OF COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSING
ROOM 39, KINDNESS HALL, MWF, 2 PM TO 3 PM
DR. MEE, Ph.D. R.N.
AVAILABILITY: SEE DOOR SCHEDULE
GRADE DETERMINANTS: ATTENDANCE 50% --- PARTICIPATION 25% --- TESTING 25%
AUDIO RECORDING ONLY WITH PERMISSION

PHILOSOPHY: WE BELIEVE THAT THE PRACTICE OF COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSING SCIENCE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE SYSTEM IMPROVES THE HEALTH AND HEALTHCARE SYSTEM FOR ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS.

DEFINITION: THE SCIENCE OF COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSING COURSE IS A DYNAMIC COURSE TEACHING THE EXISTENCE AND METHODS OF COMMUNITY POSITIVE HEALTH MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT.

GOAL: AT THE END OF THE COURSE, THE NURSING STUDENT WILL EFFECTIVELY DEMONSTRATE THE ABILITY TO APPLY NURSING DIAGNOSES, NURSING PROCESS, NURSING DIAGNOSIS, CRITICAL THINKING, AND RELATED NURSING THEORIES AND PRACTICES TO COMMUNITY NURSING HEALTH CARE.

PURPOSE: TO IMPROVE THE OVERALL HEALTH CARE OF THE COMMUNITY THROUGH EDUCATION AND THE SCIENTIFIC PRACTICE OF COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSING.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: (SEE PROGRESSION FROM SIMPLE TO MORE COMPLEX OBJECTIVES STATED UNDER "LEARNING OBJECTIVES" ON THE SYLLABUS.)

GENERAL NURSING STUDENT SYLLABUS CONTENT

The available content prepared by the nursing instructor emphasizes the science of nursing and its recognized influence on the health of humankind. There is no magic in following the exactness of the first-page syllabus format recommendation—only that the information exists and includes the data to clarify course general information.

NOTE: It is the category under each domain that represents the progression from simple to more complex. Each category has many verb possibilities.

The Big Picture: Therefore, each learning objective throughout the entire course syllabus incorporates a learning objective representing one of the three domains (cognitive, psychomotor, and affective), the nursing process (ADPIE), nursing diagnoses, and critical thinking, and nursing brain sheets. The learning objectives' complexity is presented from simple to more complex by selecting a category within each identified domain.

After identifying the objective learning domain, category, and verb in the category, the following syllabus content (going horizontally) requires the student to read, learn, and be tested according to the first column's stated learning objective.

More than one page of a syllabus might be needed. A standard or legal-sized sheet turned to "landscape" (sideways) is usually the best option.

NURSING STUDENT SYLLABUS INCLUSIONS

- Nursing Process: Assessment, diagnosing, planning, implementation, and evaluation—(ADPIE).
- Nursing Diagnosis: Problem-focused (signs and symptoms) or Risk-focused (pre-problem intervention).
- Health Promotion: Nursing behaviors that help resolve problem-focused or risk-focused health problems.
- Syndromes: Definition and learning objectives that promote the understanding of symptoms frequently occurring together.
- NANDA-International: Meaning and Purpose of the organization.
- Benjamin Bloom's Three Taxonomy/Domains: Cognitive (thinking), Psychomotor (performing), and Affective (attitudes/feelings), accompanying category and category verb.
- Critical Thinking: Objective analysis and evaluation of an issue to form a judgment.
- Nursing as a Science: Definition and applicable to course content.
- Communication Skills: General and applicable to course content.

- Leadership and Management in Nursing: Definition and recognition applicable to course content.
- Nursing Brain Sheets/Report Sheets/Think Notes

EXAMPLE   **NURSING COURSE SYLLABUS**

COURSE NO. _____ COURSE TITLE_____QUARTER/SEMESTER/DATE_____INSTRUCTOR_____

(OR): COMPANY--JOB TITLE_____ EMPLOYMENT_____ PRESENTER_____

DIRECTIONS: This is a horizontal table indicating learning expectations going from left to right. Each horizontal entry to the right of the Learning Objective column enhances the learning objective's attainment. Each additional single learning objective (according to domain) is added vertically in the learning objective column and followed with related information going horizontally.

Date	Learning Objective	Lecture Content	Reading Assignment	Learning Activity	Evaluation/Test	Comments/Other
(__/__/__) Date Learning/performance objective presented	(Start with a stated domain-- cognitive, psychomotor, or affective. Then, select a category in the indicated domain. Then, start each learning objective with an action verb from the stated category.	(Instructor's/presenter's planned lecture/presentation content to support the learning objective in the column to the left)	(Required reading related to the learning objective in the learning objective column and lecture/presentation content)	(Required activity that enhances the learning and meeting of the learning objective. (Critical Thinking activities— a must for nursing students)	(Any testing related to the learning objective lecture content, reading assignment, or learning activities. In organizations, it could include job expectations and evaluations)	(Add any other pertinent information, activity, or requirement related to meeting the learning objective in the Learning Objective column)

	Note each category in each domain goes from simple to more complex. (One obj. per cubicle-- vertically)					

RECOMMENDED READING

Nursing as a Science pdf
What is Nursing Science? – SAGE Publications---journals.sagepub.com
The Nature of Science in Nursing --- Image/ Volume 9, Issue 2/ 32-37
Is Nursing a Science Major? --- ecpi.edu
Nursing Process Steps (CRITICAL THINKING) Nursing School Success.com (excellent!)
Bloom's Taxonomy (cognitive, psychomotor, affective domains) online
Nursing Diagnosis (Nursing Diagnosis Guide and List) "All You Need to Know to Master Diagnosing." Nurseslabs.com (excellent!)
Communication Skills—leadershippoweronline.com (document of selective skills)
Leadership Skills—leadershippoweronline.com (several documents related to leadership)
Communication by this author (leadershippoweronline.com)
Critical thinking by this author (leadershippoweronline.com)
Nursing Brain Sheets—www.bing.com/images/search?q=nursing+brain+sheets+template-Bing image

AUTHOR: Carolyn R. Taylor, Ed.D. M.N. R.N.