

# Concrete Steps toward Making Outcomes and Assessment Efforts Meaningful

## *Writing or revising a student learning outcome statement*

### **Important elements of the statement**

The statement specifies what skill, behavior, or knowledge you want the students to have at the conclusion of the course.

The statement includes an action verb that is relatively easy to observe or measure. Ask yourself, "What action will be taken by the students that can be measured?" Examples of such action verbs are *compile, apply, compute, use, compare, rate, plan*, and *critique*. Examples of action verbs that are more difficult to observe or measure are *know, appreciate, learn, or understand*.

### **The student experience**

How will the students learn the concepts, skills, etc.? What will the students do? What will you do to help the students learn the concepts, skills, etc.? What products will the student produce to demonstrate his or her competencies?

### ***Measuring student learning***

Are the products you've asked students to generate (e.g., exams, quizzes, performances, essays, work flow plans) likely to demonstrate best the students' competencies? Stated differently, are the means by which students demonstrate their knowledge, skills, or behaviors the best means by which to do this? How do you determine now whether or not students exhibit or possess the desired skill, behavior, or knowledge? What are the strengths of this measure over another measure? Is this measure inadequate in any way?

Describe another way to measure the outcome or competency. Strengths? Weaknesses? Are the two measures you described redundant? Complementary?

### **The tasks ahead**

#### **Managing the workload**

- Writing the remaining outcome statements
- Identify the means of assessment
- Linking all this to the course content and schedule
- Using the assessment data to improve your teaching and students' learning