

## Course Goals, Learning Objectives, Assignments and Assessment

Writing Course Goals and Learning Objectives is the key initial step in Backward Design (Wiggins & McTighe 2004). Backward Design is an approach to compiling a course that starts with the desired results, your goals, and what you want your students to learn or to become. The process of Backward Design is to ensure that your course goals, learning objectives, and methods of assessing student learning are intentionally aligned.

<b>Goal</b>	What should students know/understand
<b>Objective</b>	What should students be able to do
<b>Assignment</b>	What is the evidence of students meeting an objective
<b>Assessment</b>	What tool are you going to use to measure student learning in the assignment

### Examples:

**Goal:** Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to *understand* the role of different transportation systems in shaping the urban landscape of America.

**Objective:** Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- 1) *Identify* different modes of transportation used in the USA since 1795 until the present day;
- 2) *Explain* how these different modes of transportation have shaped the morphology we see across the contemporary urban landscape;
- 3) *Describe* how large-scale ownership of private automobiles has created and sustained widespread suburban sprawl.

**Assignment:** In pairs, ride the WRTA bus line # 27 or # 33 from downtown Worcester to the stop on Main Street outside of Clark University's campus. As you travel this route, take notes about the types of landuses AND the different types of transportation you see. There is a lot of detail to read for in the urban landscape, so be sure to split up different responsibilities with your partner before you head out on the bus. Once you have gathered all of your information, the two of you will combine your data to write up a 5-page paper (each of you writes and submits your own paper) that details your observations and your conclusions about the relationship between urban landuse/morphology and type of transportation.

**Assessment:** Your paper will be assessed based on the five criteria outlined in the accompanying grading/feedback rubric.

### Tips for Writing **Goals AND Objectives**

- Goals AND Objectives should be student-centered rather than course-centered
- Goals AND Objectives should reflect successful student performance

### Tips for Writing **Course Goals**:

- Use broad language like “know” or “understand”
- Goals should reflect essential questions for your course and/or discipline

### Tips for Writing **Learning Objectives**:

- Each learning objective should be connected to or stem from a course goal
- Learning objectives reflect what you want your students to be able to **DO**
- Make sure each learning objective is measurable
- Make sure each learning objective is observable
- Each learning objective should target one specific aspect of student performance

	Course Goals	Learning Objectives
measurable and observable		X
student-centered rather than course-centered	X	X
reflect what you want your students to be able to <b>DO</b>		X
connected to or stem from a course goal		X
reflect successful student performance	X	X
use broad language like “know” or “understand”	X	
reflect essential questions for your course and/or discipline	X	
targets one specific aspect of student performance		X