

# WRITING STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

---

Rosanna F. Miguel

Department of Management, Marketing &  
Logistics

[rmiguel@jcu.edu](mailto:rmiguel@jcu.edu)

# Learning Goals for this Session

By the end of this session, participants will be able to accurately:

- Articulate the importance of establishing learning goals.
- Evaluate the quality of student learning goals based on established essential components.
- Write measureable, manageable and meaningful student learning goals.
- Articulate the importance of aligning course-level (Introduction to HRM), program-level (HR Major), and institutional learning goals (Boler & JCU).

# Learning Goals, Outcomes, Objectives, Oh My!

- For each course and program, must articulate statements that describe:
  - what students will know, be able to do, or value by the end of the course or program in a way that is specific and measurable.
- Boler uses “learning *objectives*” per AACSB
- CAS uses “learning *goals*”
- “*Outcomes* at JCU refer to the data collected that allow faculty to judge whether or not students have met the learning goals.”

# Why are Learning Goals Important?

- “Without clear goals, our students’ learning experiences and our assessment of them are ambiguous and unsatisfactory.” (Suskie, 2009, p. 116).
- Well-articulated learning goals minimize fuzzy terms, making measurement and assessment more manageable and meaningful.
- Our students know what to learn.
- Faculty know what to assess.

# Essential Components of a Learning Goal

- Start by asking “What do you want students to learn and why?”
  - Focus on the end, not the means. What should students be able to do after a program ends. Not *during* the program.
- Begin each statement with an action verb. Try Bloom’s taxonomy. (e.g., Articulate, Explain, Create)
- Minimize/clarify fuzzy terms.
- Use concrete terms (Describe, Write, Explain).
- Be precise, specific, and measurable.

# Frameworks for Learning Goals

## Three Main Categories

- Knowledge and conceptual understanding (remembering, replicating a simple procedure, defining, explaining).
- Thinking and other skills (application, analysis, synthesis).
- Attitudes, values, dispositions, and habits of mind (appreciation, integrity, character).

# Some Key Learning Goals Today

- Communication skills, especially writing
- Information literacy (research and problem solving) skills
- Interpersonal skills

# Writing Learning Goals

**ABCD Structure of a Learning Goal:** (adapted from HLC conference presentation)

- **Audience/Who**
  - To whom does the goal pertain?
- **Behavior/What**
  - What do you expect the audience to know/be able to do? (should include an action verb to describe the learning, such as from Bloom's Taxonomy)
- **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?



# Writing Learning Goals (Continued)

## Example:

- **Students** who major in **Management** will be able to **accurately** assess the strengths and weaknesses of **their leadership skills**.

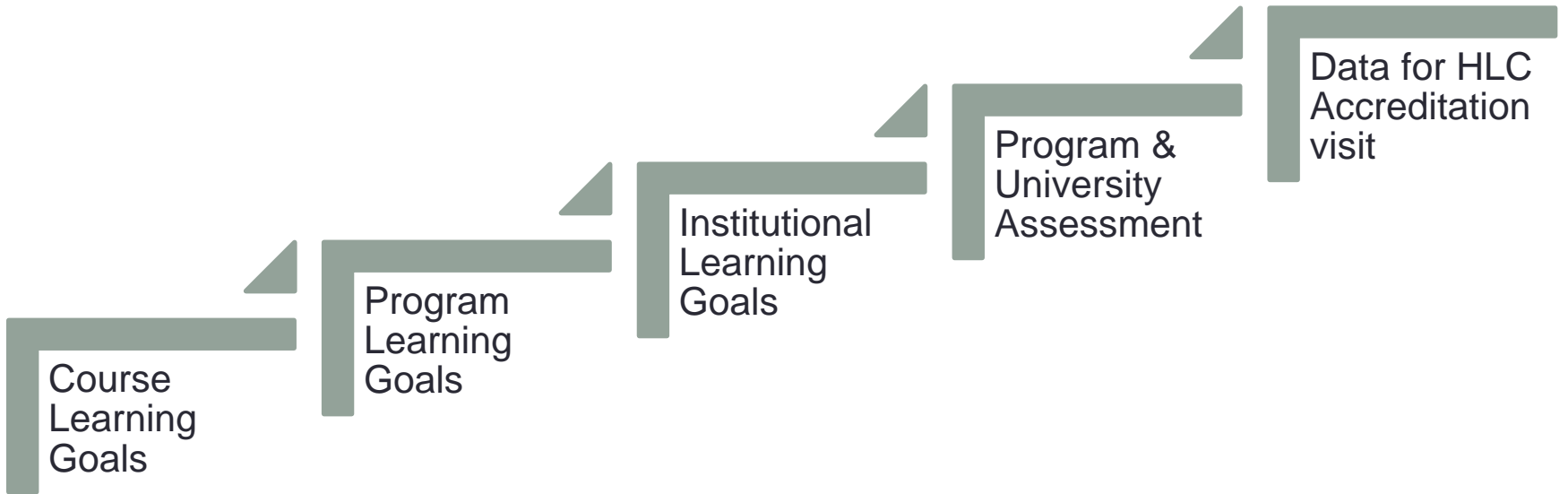
# Evaluating Learning Goals

## Learning Goals – The 3 Ms

- 1. Meaningful: How does the goal support the University or Program mission or goal?
- 2. Manageable: What is needed to promote achievement of the goal? Is the goal realistic?
- 3. Measurable: How will you know if the goal is achieved? What is the assessment method?

# Aligning Learning Goals

- A course is part of a program or general education curriculum; the program is part of a university, and the university is part of society, in which its students will live and work.



- Questions?