

## Reading a Course Outcome Summary



A Course Outcome Summary tells the faculty and the student what topics will be covered in a course, as well as, what is expected of the student during the course. It can be viewed as sort of a recipe for success. To understand the use of a Course Outcome Summary, let's use a scenario to break it down into easier terms.

Let's pretend you are teaching some friends how to make a lettuce salad. In this scenario let's also say their cooking skills are limited; so you will have to teach them some cooking/preparation steps, in order for them to make the salad. What kinds of things would you need to show them, so they could make the salad on their own? When you teach others a new skill, it often involves having them watch you as you explain the steps, and then giving them practice time to try it for themselves, with you guiding their practice. What usually happens next is that the "teacher" has the "students" show what they can do on their own. In this scenario, you ask your friends to make the salad all by themselves. How are they doing? What things are you looking for to be sure they are doing the tasks correctly, and that the salad will taste awesome?

Now we are ready to break down the scenario and relate it to the Course Outcome Summary you have for a course.

**Competency: Is a big goal or outcome for the course/class.**

The more credit hours a course has the more competencies it will have. This describes what you will be able to do at the end of the course. In our example above: Make a lettuce salad is the competency.

**Learning Objectives: These are the baby steps an instructor will use to teach you the basic concepts or skills needed to meet the competency (goal of the class).**

In our example above, this would be all of the steps and things you were showing your friends, so they could make the salad on their own.

**Performance Standard and Criteria: This area of the COS describes what kind of assessment(s) the instructor will use to evaluate a student's performance on meeting the competency (goal for the class). The criteria is a list of how you can prove you know what you know or can do the skill/task by yourself.**

In our scenario example above, having your friends actually make a salad for themselves would be the assessment. That's their "project" or final product. The criteria would be all of the things you were looking for to be sure they were following the recipe, making the salad safely, and that the salad actually tasted good. You might have listed attractiveness or presentation, timeliness, etc. as part of your criteria.