

# SFCC Style Guide

Instructions for Writing and Revising Courses to Submit to the  
State Faculty Curriculum Committee (SFCC)

For purposes of consistency, please follow these guidelines for writing and submitting new and revised courses to the State Faculty Curriculum Committee (SFCC).

***REMINDER! New and revised courses should be distributed to the discipline for preliminary feedback. Obtaining the Discipline Chair approval before the course(s) reach the monthly BB is a must.***

## General Instructions

<https://internal.cccs.edu/academic-affairs/common-course-numbering-system/> Link to the CCNS Course Submission Templates, Blooms Taxonomy Action Verbs, FAQs about the CCNS Course Submission Templates, Flowchart of the Course Submission Process, and notice about the Variable Credit Courses.

Complete the appropriate [CCCNS Course Submission Template](#):

- CCNS Course submission Template – general education
  - CCNS Course Submission Template CTE
  - CCNS Course Submission gtPathway
- The short course title is allowed only **30 characters**, including spaces.
- Be mindful of course numbering and where the proposed course falls within the discipline's course numbering. (e.g., 100 level vs. 200 level course proposals). Also, remember to review the course archives when looking for new course numbers. Unless under certain circumstances, we are not reusing course numbers at this time.
- Request to change course credits and titles typically will mean a new course number. However, there may be certain circumstances where the availability of course numbers within a prefix may warrant utilizing and updating a current course number.
- Check CCCNS for potential overlap with other discipline courses. Proposed course should be at least 20% different from other current discipline course offerings with similar outcomes.
- Ask discipline to agree on (CDHE) course type so contact hours are calculated correctly (e.g., LEC, Lecture/Lab, etc.) across every institution teaching this course with minimum and maximum hours noted on the proposal <https://higher.ed.colorado.gov/publications/policies/Current/v-partb-Guidelines.pdf>
- Notice, some of the numbers have been set aside for variable credit, and shouldn't be considered for non-variable but for very specific circumstances.
- While "unarchiving" a course is possible, be sure to review the course for dated material.

## Course Description

- In **75 words or less**, describe what the course does, not what the student will do. Emphasize skills to be learned rather than modes of instruction or assessments used in a course.

*Example 1 (Avoid this...): "Participants practice the seven tools to identify...."*

*Rather state like this: "The course focuses on ways to apply the tools to ...."*

*Example 2: "Guest speakers are an integral part of this course." (Strike this and leave out entirely).*

- Begin with an action verb – Link to Blooms <https://internal.cccs.edu/academic-affairs/common-course-numbering-system/>
- Use complete sentences after the first sentence
- Second sentence can start with *The course covers...* or *Topics include ...* to avoid use of passive voice about what the course includes.

*Example 3: "Introduces significant human questions and emphasizes understanding the meaning and methods of philosophy. This course includes human condition, knowledge, freedom, history, ethics, the futures, and religion."*

## Course/Student Learning Outcomes

Course learning outcomes identify what the student will know or be able to demonstrate when the course is successfully completed.

- Number each outcome with Arabic numbers (e.g., 1, 2, 3...)
- Learning outcomes should emphasize knowledge and/or skills the course teaches rather than modes of instruction or assessments used in a course (see similar note in description section)
- Use Bloom's Taxonomy action verbs (see attached) to begin each outcome that are appropriate for 100-level, 200-level, and higher courses.
- Each outcome and verb used for the outcome must be measurable through assessment; avoid vague or unmeasurable verbs like "recognizes" and "understands"
- Each outcome should be a single skill that is demonstrated and measured. Do not combine multiple skills in one learning outcome

For example:

*Avoid this:*

"Read, analyze and apply written material to new situations."

1. Read and analyze written material. \*(this is one of the few times more than one verb can be combined in a learning outcome since they are all considered part of the same cognitive process).
2. Apply philosophical theories to current issues."

- Student learning outcomes list should cover the scope of the course but cannot exceed 20 learning outcomes (the exception being some CTE courses that have more than 20 outcomes because of industry standards or accreditation)
- Required course learning outcomes are listed first. These outcomes are the mandatory, taught at 100%, learning outcomes. Recommended course learning outcomes (if any) are listed after the required course learning outcomes. These outcomes are optional, discipline-recommended outcomes to include if time in the semester allows.
- Avoid creating lists or outlines of topics in learning outcomes. The appropriate place for this kind of information is in the topical outline.
- Avoid faulty **parallelism** in SLO statements. Nouns should be parallel with nouns, participles with participles, gerunds with gerunds, infinitives with infinitives, clauses with clauses, etc. When your SLO statement includes a **series**, make sure you have not used different grammatical formats for the elements of the statement.

Faulty parallelism:

*This course provides a clear sense of purpose for the following: structured goals, overcome barriers, leverage practical strategies, tools, and techniques to develop and implement an effective time management framework.*

Parallel construction:

*This course emphasizes **developing** structured goals, **overcoming** barriers, and **leveraging** practical strategies, tools, and techniques to develop and implement an effective time management framework.*

- In the parallel version, all the elements in the series begin with gerunds (nouns ending in ...ing): *developing, overcoming, and leveraging.*
- In the nonparallel version, in addition to an improper use of the colon, the first element of the series involves use of a noun, not the gerund form.

Consult Bloom's Taxonomy of Major Educational Objectives for additional information.

Other helpful websites available include

<http://www.coun.uvic.ca/learn/program/hndouts/bloom.html> and

<http://www.tedi.uq.edu.au/Assess/Assessment/bloomtax.html>

### **Course Learning Outcomes Example:** (From BIO 103)

1. Apply the scientific method and inquiry to questions in animal biology.
2. Utilize the principles of evolution to compare major animal phyla.
3. Demonstrate understanding of the hierarchical organization of animals.
4. Compare characteristics and adaptations of the major animal phyla.
7. Describe the dynamics of population growth and principles of animal ecology.
8. Describe the guiding principles of animal behavior.
9. Demonstrate understanding of the loss of biodiversity and animal conservation.

## Topical Outline

The topical outline provides greater detail about the curriculum and how it aligns with the Course Learning Outcomes. Think of the topical outlines as the steps used to reach your student learning outcomes (SLOs). The topics in the course description and the learning outcomes should be reflected in the topical outline.

Identify topics and major subtopics covered in the course

- Topical outline should be reflective of the course description and learning outcomes. Avoid including topics not addressed in course description or in learning outcomes
- Begin each item with a noun, use sentence case, avoiding over capitalization unless it is a proper noun.
- Use Roman numerals (e.g., I., II., III., IV.,...), followed by upper case "A", and then start with numbers "1". More than 1 sub-point is needed, i.e. an "a." should be followed by a "b."; an "i." should be followed by an "ii."

Should the outline be (formal outline):

- I. Summary
  - A. Reasons
    - 1. Improved
    - 2. Productive
    - 3. Educated
  - B. Need for improvement
- II. Experience

- If you have a 1, you must have a 2. If you have an "a" you must have a "b". If there is a single sub-heading an "a" only, but no "b"... it should become it's own roman numeral heading.

**Topical Outline Example:** (from PHI 111)

- I. The meaning and values of philosophy
  - a. Definitions of philosophy
  - b. Methods of philosophy
  - c. Applications of philosophy
- II. Knowledge (epistemology)
  - a. The meaning of knowledge
  - b. Sources of knowledge
  - c. Verification of knowledge
- III. Philosophy and the nature of reality
  - a. Religion
  - b. Cosmology (philosophy of science)
  - c. Mind-body relationship
- IV. Ethics and the human condition
  - a. Normative justification

- b. Freedom
- c. Aesthetics
- V. Philosophy and society
  - a. Politics
  - b. History

## RELEVANT PUNCTUATION and MECHANICS and TIPS FOR USING LISTS

### PERIODS (.)

Be consistent to include or not include periods throughout learning outcomes.

### COMMAS (,)

Use commas to separate items in a series. (Example: Students will write an instruction manual, a quick guide, and a reference sheet.)

### SEMICOLONS (;)

- join two independent clauses (complete thoughts)
- separates items in a series that already have commas within them

### COLONS (:)

- placed before a list
- technically should only follow a complete sentence

### HYPHENS (-)

Use a hyphen when you combine two or more words as an adjective before a noun:

two-hour exam  
all-terrain vehicle  
blue-spotted dress

Do NOT use a hyphen when the adjective comes AFTER the noun:

The exam is scheduled for two hours.  
Her dress is blue spotted.

### Forward Slash aka Virule (/)

Forward slash is used to indicate a choice between the two words it separates, and can be translated as *or* and should not be used when the word *or* can be used in its place.

Exception is when using *and/or* as the word choices.

### CAPITALIZATION

Capitalize proper nouns, titles, trade names, places, languages, religions, and organizations.  
Example: State Faculty Curriculum Committee (SFCC)

Do not capitalize general references. Example: curriculum committees

## USE OF ACRONYMS

Please spell out acronyms used in course descriptions, learning outcomes, or topical outlines the first time with the acronym in parentheses. Acronyms may be used exclusively throughout once spelled out initially.

## TIPS FOR USING LISTS

-If the listed items are phrases, use a lowercase letter at the start. Do not use a period or a comma at the end. The space beneath the last item indicates the end of the list.

-If the listed items are complete sentences, use an uppercase letter at the start and a period at the end.

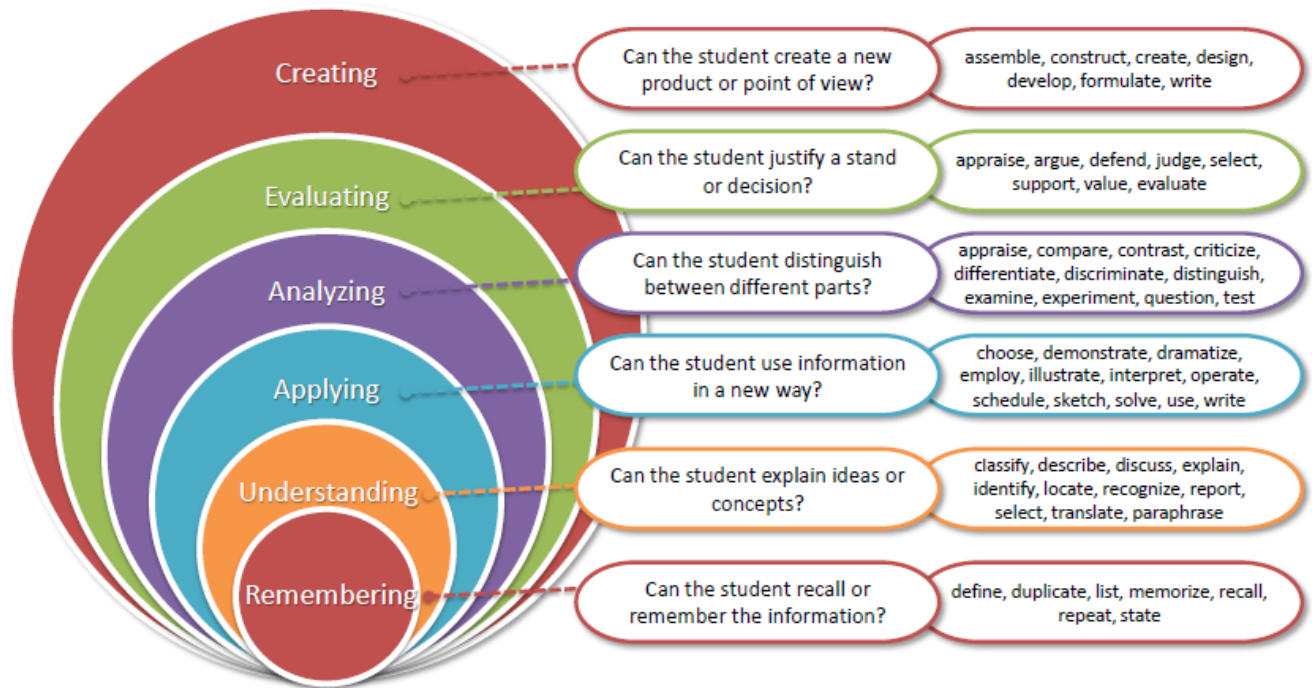
-If the listed items are phrases followed by complete sentences, start each phrase with an uppercase letter and end it with a period. Begin the complete sentences with uppercase letters and end them with periods.

-If the list consists of two kinds of items—phrases and complete sentences—capitalize each item and end it with a period.

## Exceptions and more exceptions (because there are always exceptions to every rule or practice...)

- Avoid “critically read” in course learning outcomes. Consider using “evaluate” instead.
- Ampersand (&) is acceptable in topical outlines but not in course titles, course descriptions, or course learning outcomes.

# Bloom's Taxonomy (Revised)



## REVISED Bloom's Taxonomy Action Verbs

Definitions	I. Remembering	II. Understanding	III. Applying	IV. Analyzing	V. Evaluating	VI. Creating
<b>Bloom's Definition</b>	Exhibit memory of previously learned material by recalling facts, terms, basic concepts, and answers.	Demonstrate understanding of facts and ideas by organizing, comparing, translating, interpreting, giving descriptions, and stating main ideas.	Solve problems to new situations by applying acquired knowledge, facts, techniques and rules in a different way.	Examine and break information into parts by identifying motives or causes. Make inferences and find evidence to support generalizations.	Present and defend opinions by making judgments about information, validity of ideas, or quality of work based on a set of criteria.	Compile information together in a different way by combining elements in a new pattern or proposing alternative solutions.
<b>Verbs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose</li> <li>• Define</li> <li>• Find</li> <li>• How</li> <li>• Label</li> <li>• List</li> <li>• Match</li> <li>• Name</li> <li>• Omit</li> <li>• Recall</li> <li>• Relate</li> <li>• Select</li> <li>• Show</li> <li>• Spell</li> <li>• Tell</li> <li>• What</li> <li>• When</li> <li>• Where</li> <li>• Which</li> <li>• Who</li> <li>• Why</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classify</li> <li>• Compare</li> <li>• Contrast</li> <li>• Demonstrate</li> <li>• Explain</li> <li>• Extend</li> <li>• Illustrate</li> <li>• Infer</li> <li>• Interpret</li> <li>• Outline</li> <li>• Relate</li> <li>• Rephrase</li> <li>• Show</li> <li>• Summarize</li> <li>• Translate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply</li> <li>• Build</li> <li>• Choose</li> <li>• Construct</li> <li>• Develop</li> <li>• Experiment with</li> <li>• Identify</li> <li>• Interview</li> <li>• Make use of</li> <li>• Model</li> <li>• Organize</li> <li>• Plan</li> <li>• Select</li> <li>• Solve</li> <li>• Utilize</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze</li> <li>• Assume</li> <li>• Categorize</li> <li>• Classify</li> <li>• Compare</li> <li>• Conclusion</li> <li>• Contrast</li> <li>• Discover</li> <li>• Dissect</li> <li>• Distinguish</li> <li>• Divide</li> <li>• Examine</li> <li>• Function</li> <li>• Inference</li> <li>• Inspect</li> <li>• List</li> <li>• Motive</li> <li>• Relationships</li> <li>• Simplify</li> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• Take part in</li> <li>• Test for</li> <li>• Theme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree</li> <li>• Appraise</li> <li>• Assess</li> <li>• Award</li> <li>• Choose</li> <li>• Compare</li> <li>• Conclude</li> <li>• Criteria</li> <li>• Criticize</li> <li>• Decide</li> <li>• Deduct</li> <li>• Defend</li> <li>• Determine</li> <li>• Disprove</li> <li>• Estimate</li> <li>• Evaluate</li> <li>• Explain</li> <li>• Importance</li> <li>• Influence</li> <li>• Interpret</li> <li>• Judge</li> <li>• Justify</li> <li>• Mark</li> <li>• Measure</li> <li>• Opinion</li> <li>• Perceive</li> <li>• Prioritize</li> <li>• Prove</li> <li>• Rate</li> <li>• Recommend</li> <li>• Rule on</li> <li>• Select</li> <li>• Support</li> <li>• Value</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adapt</li> <li>• Build</li> <li>• Change</li> <li>• Choose</li> <li>• Combine</li> <li>• Compile</li> <li>• Compose</li> <li>• Construct</li> <li>• Create</li> <li>• Delete</li> <li>• Design</li> <li>• Develop</li> <li>• Discuss</li> <li>• Elaborate</li> <li>• Estimate</li> <li>• Formulate</li> <li>• Happen</li> <li>• Imagine</li> <li>• Improve</li> <li>• Invent</li> <li>• Make up</li> <li>• Maximize</li> <li>• Minimize</li> <li>• Modify</li> <li>• Original</li> <li>• Originate</li> <li>• Plan</li> <li>• Predict</li> <li>• Propose</li> <li>• Solution</li> <li>• Solve</li> <li>• Suppose</li> <li>• Test</li> <li>• Theory</li> </ul>

Anderson, L. W., & Krathwohl, D. R. (2001). A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing, Abridged Edition. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.