PLAYING MATCHMAKER: PAIRING STRONG COURSE OBJECTIVES WITH THE RIGHT ASSESSMENT METHODS

TEACHING TUESDAY PRESENTATION

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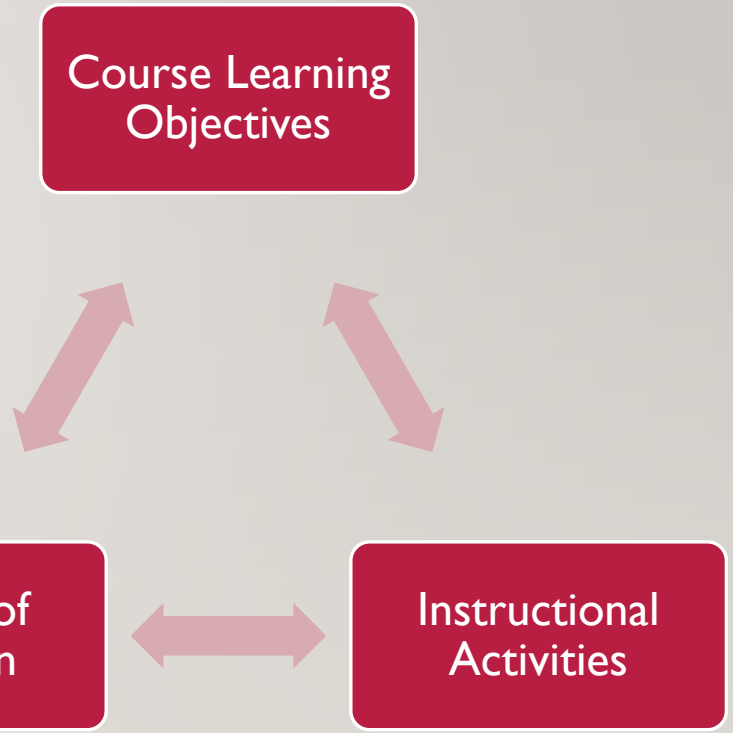
LEARNING OBJECTIVES
AT THE END OF THE SESSION, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO…

- Identify the components that make up an effective course objective
- Revise your own course objectives to make them more effective
- Classify your course objectives using Bloom's Taxonomy
- Create/revise course assignments so they align well with your stated course objectives

THE FOUNDATION: EFFECTIVE COURSE OBJECTIVES

- The foundation for documenting learning gains: clear course objectives



- Course objectives:
  - Bulleted statements describing the essential skills, competencies, or knowledge that students can expect to achieve as a result of (successfully) completing your course
  - Evidence based rather than aspirational
  - Course objectives are owned by the department
  - Should appear on page 1 of the syllabus, and the "stem" for all the objectives is "By the end of the term, students will be able to…"

RECIPE FOR AN EFFECTIVE COURSE OBJECTIVE

- 1. Write the thing you want students to learn
  - Examples
    - The seven steps in the research process
    - The difference between objective and interpretive theories

RECIPE FOR AN EFFECTIVE COURSE OBJECTIVE

- 2. <u>Choose the right learning verb</u>
  - What level of learning?
  - What will students be able to do as a result of the learning?

Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyze	Evaluate	Create
Choose	Classify	Choose	Categorize	Appraise	Combine
Describe	Defend	Dramatize	Classify	Judge	Compose
Define	Demonstrate	Explain	Compare	Criticize	Construct
Label	Distinguish	Generalize	Differentiate	Defend	Design
List	Explain	Judge	Distinguish	Compare	Develop
Locate	Express	Organize	Identify	Assess	Formulate
Match	Extend	Paint	Infer	Conclude	Hypothesize
Memorize	Give Examples	Prepare	Point out	Contrast	Invent
Name	Illustrate	Produce	Select	Critique	Make
Omit	Indicate	Select	Subdivide	Determine	Originate
Recite	Interrelate	Show	Survey	Grade	Organize
Select	Interpret	Sketch	Arrange	Justify	Plan
State	Infer	Solve	Breakdown	Measure	Produce
Count	Match	Use	Combine	Rank	Role Play
Draw	Paraphrase	Add	Detect	Rate	Drive
Outline	Represent	Calculate	Diagram	Support	Devise
Point	Restate	Change	Discriminate	Test	Generate
Quote	Rewrite	Classify	Illustrate		Integrate
Recall	Select	Complete	Outline		Prescribe
Recognize	Show	Compute	Point out		Propose
Repeat	Summarize	Discover	Separate		Reconstruct
Reproduce	Tell	Divide			Revise
	Translate	Examine			Rewrite
	Associate	Graph			Transform
	Compute	Interpolate			
	Convert	Manipulate			
	Discuss	Modify			
	Estimate	Operate			
	Extrapolate	Subtract			
	Generalize				
	Predict				

RECIPE FOR AN EFFECTIVE COURSE OBJECTIVE

- 3. <u>Now stir them together</u>.
  - Examples:
    - Describe the seven steps in the research process
    - Differentiate an objective theory from an interpretive theory

BAD APPLE GOOD APPLE

- ***1. Understand the American criminal justice system.***
- Revised version: *Describe the history of the American criminal justice system.*
  - Explanation: Understand is not a measurable verb, however the intent of the instructor was to have the students be able to describe, which is measurable. We also need to specify what students should know about the criminal justice system.
- ***2. Understand elements of editing.***
- Revised version: *Identify elements of editing, including composition, setting and lighting.*
  - Explanation: Understand is not a measurable verb, and it was too broad for a course level objective. Therefore, we should narrow the focus.
- ***3. Experience Christian worship practices.***
- Revised version: Differentiate among several significant Christian worship practices.
  - Explanation: This is an instructional activity, not an outcome. If you have activities in your course objectives, ask yourself "what is the outcome of the activity?"

NOW LOOK IN THE MIRROR & TELL ME WHAT YOU SEE

- Pull up course objectives from one of your own courses. How would you evaluate the learning objectives?
- Do the learning verbs and stated outcomes adequately capture the knowledge, competencies, and skills students can gain as a result of completing your course?
- Using what you learned so far, how could you improve them? Do you know how the course contributes to your department's program assessment objectives or to general education?

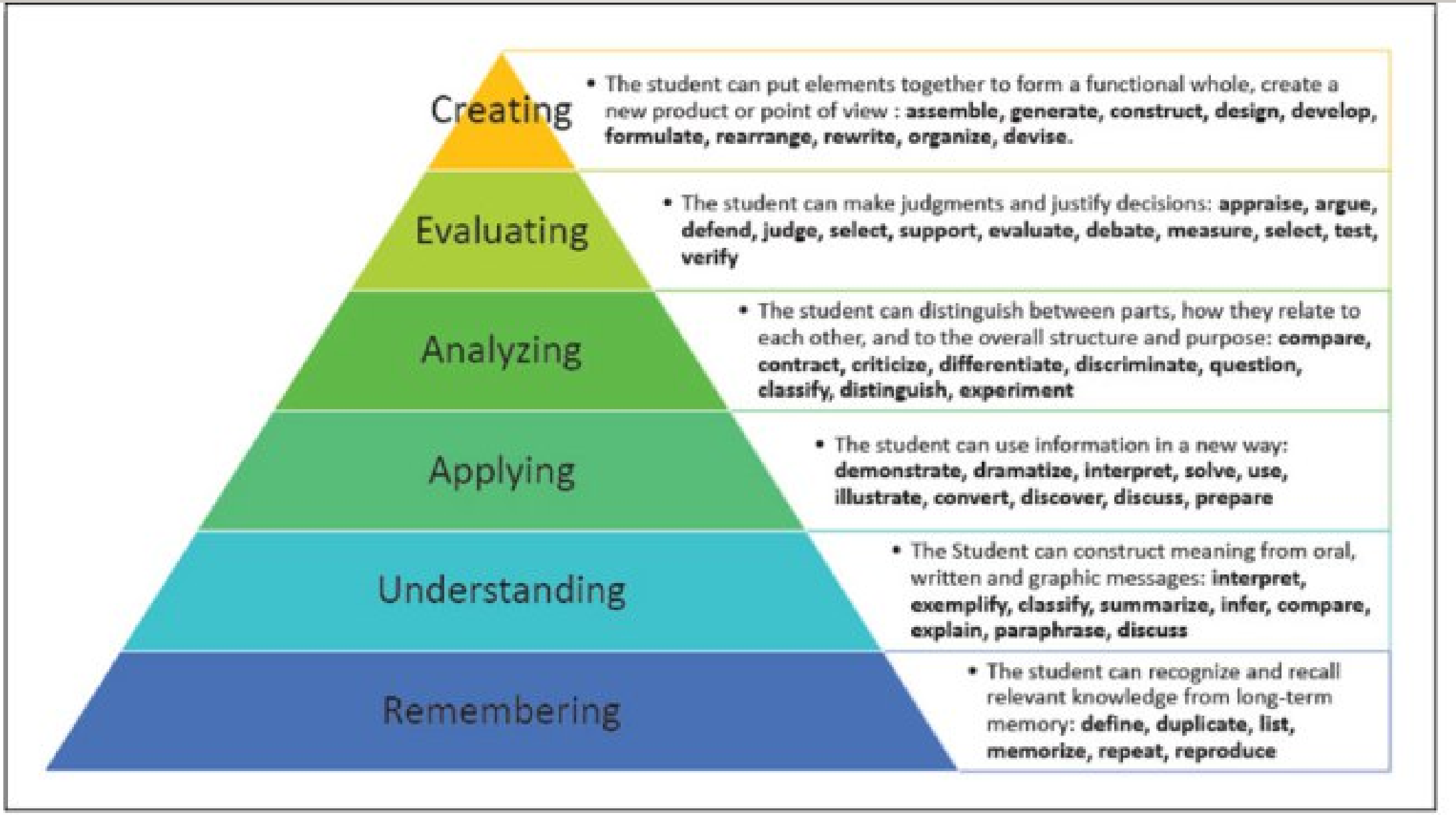
NOW WE'RE ON TO STEP TWO. WHEN WE ASSESS LEARNING, WE ANSWER…

- 1. Are we teaching our course objectives? What are our students actually learning?
- 2. What can we do to help our students learn? What types of changes can we make (to instruction or assessment) to increase actual student learning?
- Only works if we're measuring the right thing (clear course objectives) with our assessment methods (tests, papers, quizzes, etc.)

HOW AM I CURRENTLY ASSESSING THESE OBJECTIVES?

- Take a look at the same course objectives from the earlier exercise.
- Make note of the methods by which you are currently assessing (measuring student progress on) these objectives.
- Also make note of any significant assignments that don't seem to tie to course objectives.

DIFFERENT LEVELS OF LEARNING CALL FOR DIFFERENT METHODS OF ASSESSMENT



CREATING THAT PERFECT MATCH

- Take a look at the handout (the side suggesting types of assessment methods for the various levels of learning objectives). Identify which category your course objectives fit into.
- Which course objectives and assignments do you think match up well?
- Which assignments/objectives need revision in order to better align, and how will you do this?

THAT'S A WRAP.

THANKS FOR PLAYING MATCHMAKER WITH ME TODAY!