

# Writing and Aligning Objectives

Goals and objectives help set clear expectations for students and provides a practical meaning to learning progression. When writing goals and objectives for your course, you want to keep the big-picture in mind by specifically asking the "what," "when," and "how" students will achieve the **general** course goals and objectives. This is done by mapping and writing **specific** session objectives, ensuring that your session objectives are aligned and folded throughout the course in a way that makes sense for the learner and reaches the course goals and objectives.

## Similarities and Differences

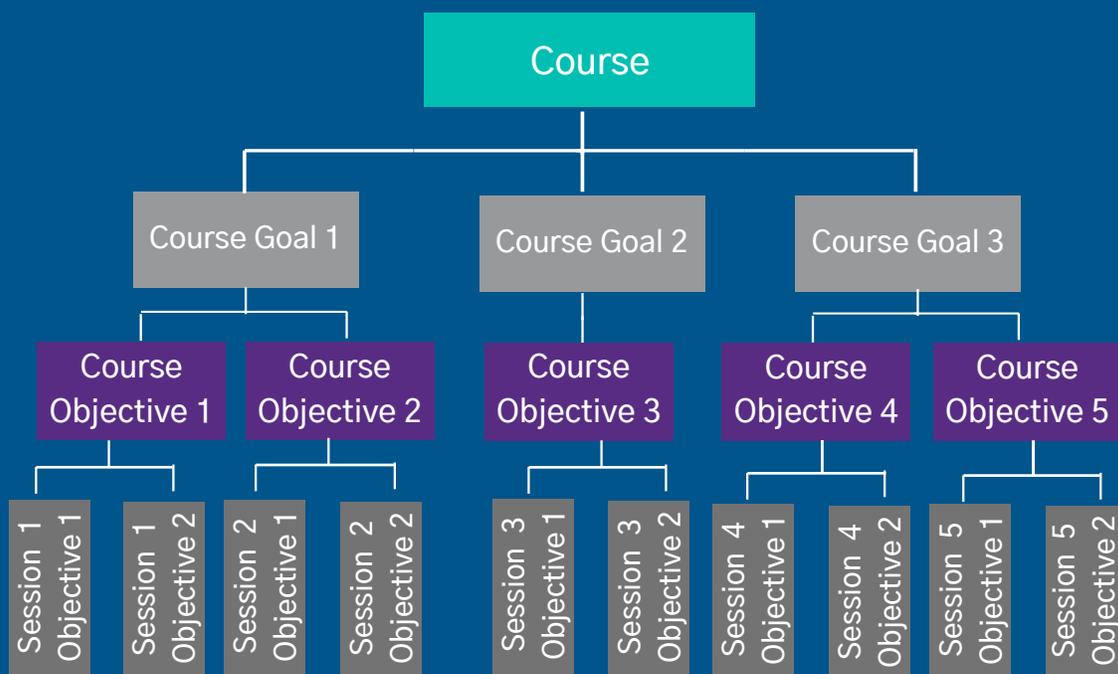
### Goals

- a broad, generalized statement about what is to be learned.
- intangible
- abstract
- achievable
- provide a framework for writing objectives
- are consistent with the mission and vision of the program or institution

### Objectives

- specific, measurable, realistic, observable behaviors of what a learner is to do
- precise
- tangible
- concrete
- achievable
- measurable
- assessable
- use verbs that specify observable behaviors
- indicate an appropriate level of attainment
- use simple language

- 1 Create a big-picture outline for your course, mapping out course goals and objectives. Keep in mind that you will also have session objectives for each course objective.



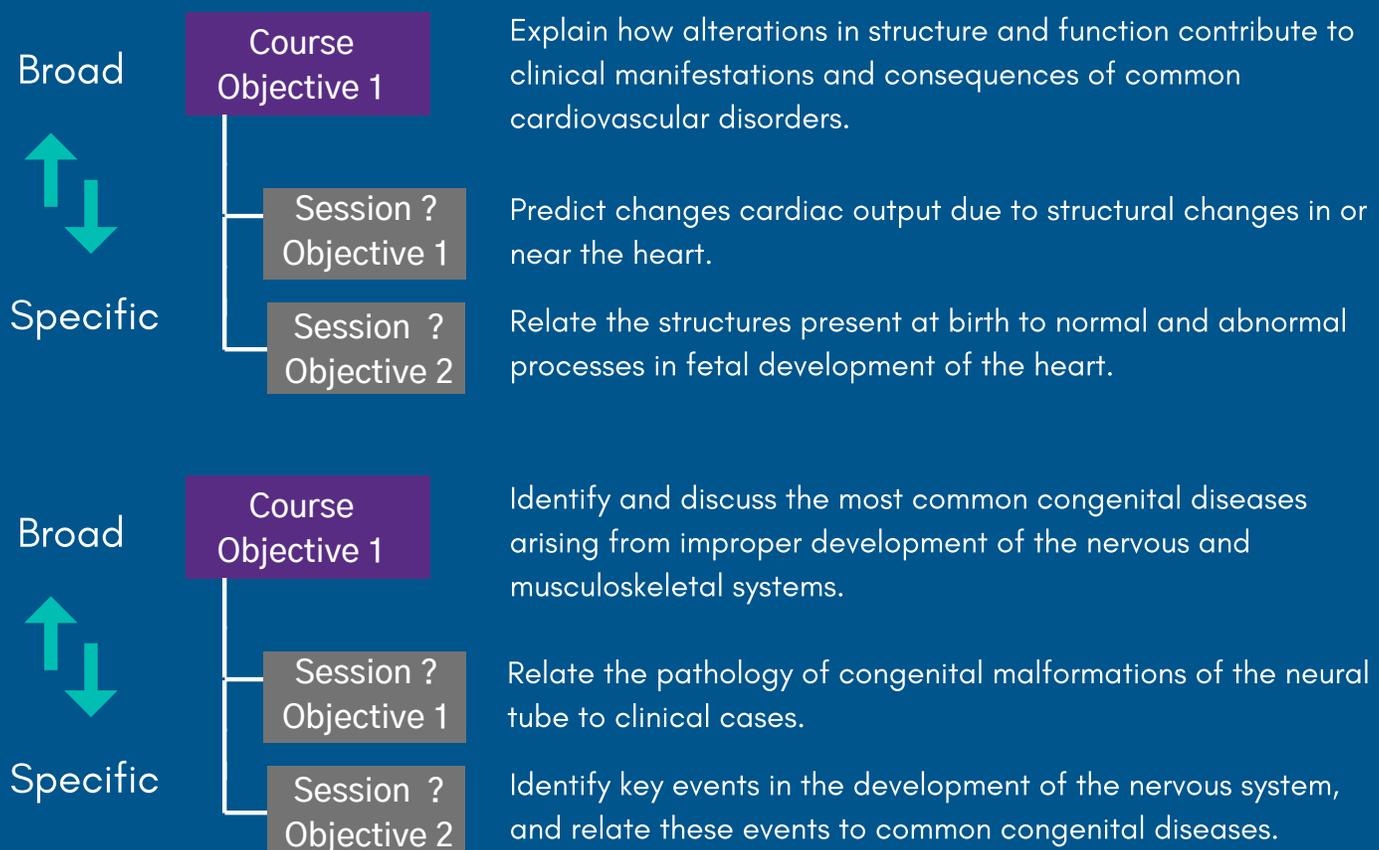
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- 2 After identifying your course goals and objectives, you will need to determine which session(s) will address each course objective and start to write your session objectives.

A key distinction between **a course objective and a session objective** is that a course objective encapsulates what learners need to know for the entire course (broad), while session objectives encapsulates what learners need to know for a session (specific). While distinct from each other, they also inform each other.

## Examples from SOM Curriculum

Below are examples from two SOM courses that demonstrate how course objectives set the stage for what learners will know by the end of the course. The corresponding session objectives can be seen as smaller steps to achieve the larger course objective.



- 3 After mapping out your course goals, course objectives, and session objectives, review your outline starting from the course goals down to the session objectives. Is your course laid out in a way that makes sense for learning? Do your session objectives align with your course goals and objectives?