

IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction System

Selecting IDEA Learning Objectives



The selection of relevant course objectives is an essential part of the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction System. This document will explain how to select Learning Objectives and why your selection of objectives is important.

Purpose of Selecting Relevant Course Objectives

Unlike IDEA, most student ratings of instruction surveys are designed as a single form process requiring only students to respond. This format is typically used because the goal is to collect student feedback on an instructor's teaching methods and behaviors. The results of these types of instruments are then usually compared to a model of what a teacher should be doing in order to judge teaching effectiveness.

The philosophy behind the IDEA system is different. The IDEA survey's chief indicator of teaching effectiveness is how well students rate their progress on the types of learning that faculty target. Since every course is different, it is important to identify targeted learning goals. Faculty can identify course objectives by completing the Objectives Selection Form (OSF).

Select Learning ObjectivesDiscipline Code: 30.1601

As a general rule, prioritize what you want students to learn by selecting no more than 3-5 objectives as "Important" or "Essential".
When calculating Progress on Relevant Objectives, IDEA weighs Minor/ Not Relevant "0", Important objectives "1", Essential objectives "2"

5 Learning Objectives have been selected as "Important" or "Essential"- Autofilled objective recommended by your Admin. You can only increase this value

Learning Objectives	Minor	Important	Essential
Gaining a basic understanding of the subject (e.g., factual knowledge, methods, principles, generalizations, theories)	☒	☐	☐
Developing knowledge and understanding of diverse perspectives, global awareness, or other cultures	☒	☐	☐
Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)	☐	☐	☒
Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course	☒	☐	☐
Acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team	☐	☐	☒
Developing creative capacities (inventing; designing; writing; performing in art, music, drama, etc.)	☒	☐	☐
Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual/cultural activity (music, science, literature, etc.)	☒	☐	☐
Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing	☐	☒	☐
Learning how to find, evaluate, and use resources to explore a topic in depth	☐	☒	☐
Developing ethical reasoning and/or ethical decision making	☒	☐	☐
Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view	☐	☒	☐
Learning to apply knowledge and skills to benefit others or serve the public good	☒	☐	☐
Learning appropriate methods for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting numerical information	☒	☐	☐

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As a general rule, prioritize what you want students to learn by selecting no more than 3-5 objectives as *Important* or *Essential*. When calculating "Progress on Relevant Objectives," IDEA weighs *Minor/Not Relevant* objectives "0," *Important* objectives "1," and *Essential* objectives "2."

The selection of relevant course objectives is an essential component to the IDEA student ratings system. It gives faculty a voice in the rating process and empowers the faculty member to be an active participant in the assessment process.

In addition to providing student feedback on how they rate their progress on learning, faculty are provided with specific suggestions to consider (see the formative tab of the Diagnostic Report) as they work toward helping students make better progress on their learning goals.

How to Select Learning Objectives

When faculty design courses, one of the first things they usually do is decide what they want their students to learn. They craft their learning targets into learning “objectives” or “outcomes.” It is important that these statements be focused on what the student will learn rather than on what the teacher will do in the class.

The IDEA Learning Objectives

If you are using the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction Diagnostic Feedback or Learning Essentials surveys, you will need to decide how your targeted learning goals map onto the IDEA objectives.

How many objectives should I select?

To begin this process, it is helpful to keep in mind that, as a rule of thumb, you may want to limit your selection to between 3-5 objectives. Although all 13 learning objectives sound like great learning goals for all students, it is unrealistic to expect that, in a single course, students could make significant progress on all or even most of them. Try to prioritize what you want students to learn by selecting no more than 3-5 objectives as *Important* or *Essential*; however, be true to your course. If you are teaching a course where you are targeting only one objective (such as a lab experience), then it would be appropriate to select that one objective on the Objective Selection Form. On the other hand, if you are teaching a capstone class in the major, and you have targeted many learning objectives, it may be appropriate for you to select more than five objectives.

Which objectives should I select?

How do you actually select which IDEA objectives are relevant (*Important* or *Essential*) to your course? Here are three different approaches that might help you with this task. First, you can use a three-question guide to assist you in your decision-making. Ask yourself these three questions about each of the IDEA objectives:

1. Is this a significant part of the course?
2. Do I do something specific to help the students accomplish this objective?
3. Does the student's progress on this objective affect his or her grade?

If you answer “yes” to each of these questions regarding a particular objective, then you should rate that objective as either *Essential* or *Important*. Keep in mind that if you rate the objective as *Minor*, you are not saying that the objective is unimportant or not relevant. Instead, you are indicating that your course will not focus on that objective.

Another recommended approach is to review individual course objectives as a group, such as a faculty group within your department or as a part of a curriculum mapping exercise for a particular program. If this process is used at your institution, relevant objectives for multiple courses can be uploaded at one time, which will then “autofill” objectives on each course Objectives Selection Form. Objectives that are “autofilled” will appear as a square box on the form (rather than a circle). Depending on your institution's policies, faculty may make adjustments to the objectives on the Objectives Selection Form by increasing the level of relevance (from minor to important/essential, or important to essential), but may not “downgrade” a preselected relevant objective. If you are unable to make changes using your individual Objectives Selection Form, you should contact your systems administrator on your campus.

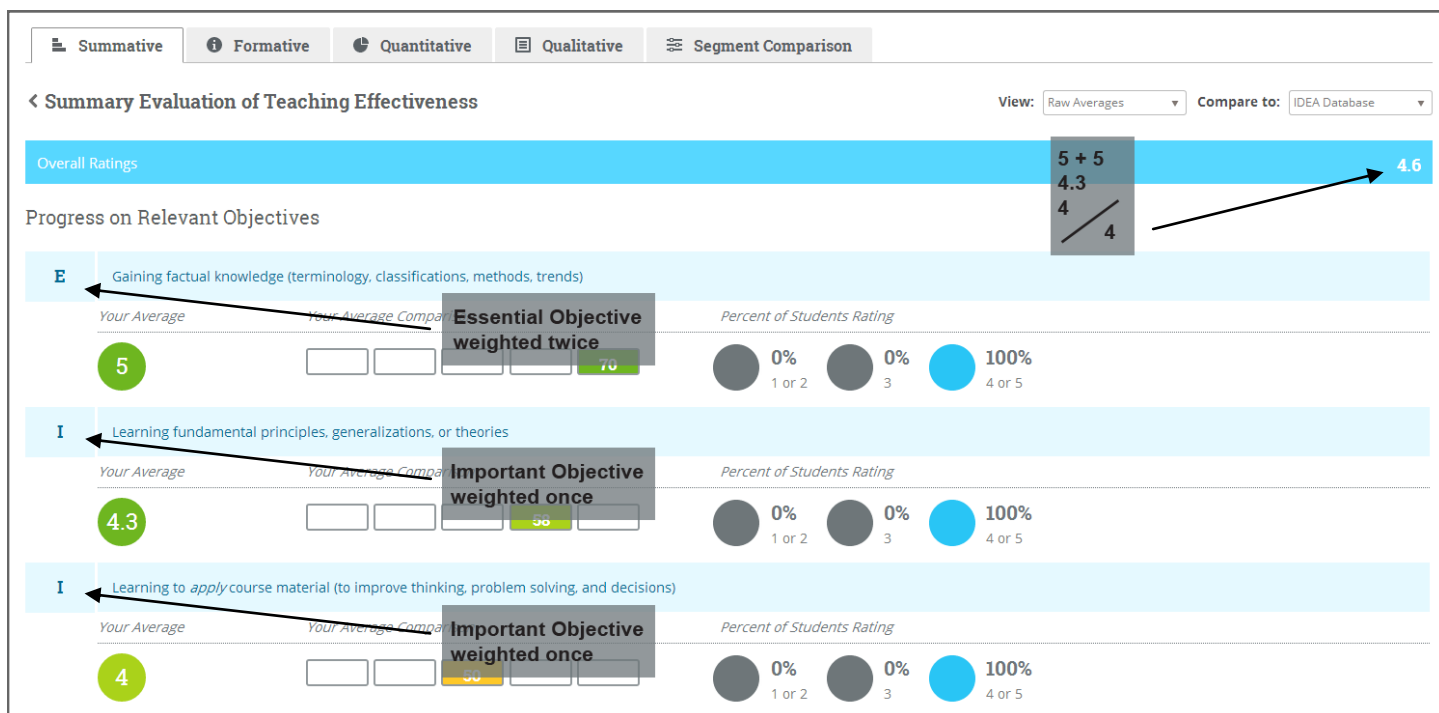
For more information on selecting objectives, refer to the IDEA website at ideaedu.org/support/strategies-for-selecting-learning-objectives/.

Why Your Selection of Objectives is Important

One reason your selection of objectives is important is that your summative results are tailored to what you select as *Important* or *Essential*. Here is how it works:

1. If you select an objective (from among the 13 IDEA Learning Objectives) as *Essential*, the average ratings that students provide on their progress on this objective will be double weighted in the process of calculating your “Progress on Relevant Objectives” (PRO) and “Overall Ratings” scores.
2. If you select an objective as *Important*, the average rating will be single weighted.
3. If you select an objective as *Minor*, the average ratings that students provide will not be used at all in calculating your PRO and “Overall Ratings” scores since you have indicated that that objective is not being targeted in your course.
4. If you do not select any objectives, they will all default to *Important* with single weight. The ratings for all 13 objectives would be used to calculate your PRO score. In a case such as this, the report would not be tailored to your particular class, and it would have less meaning for you.

The following example illustrates how the “Progress on Relevant Objectives” is calculated. Only objectives marked as *Important* or *Essential* are calculated in the score. Objectives that were selected by this instructor as *Minor* are not displayed. Only one objective was marked as *Essential* in this example. The average raw score rating for this objective was added twice in the calculation since objectives selected as *Essential* are double weighted. Two other objectives were selected as *Important*, and each of the average raw scores for those was added once. The sum of the averages is divided by the total number of scores that were added in order to provide the “Progress on Relevant Objectives” score.



As you think through the appropriate selection of objectives, you are deciding which scores will be used to calculate the “Progress on Relevant Objectives” and “Overall Ratings” scores.

Formative Feedback

Your selection of objectives is also important because the formative feedback you receive in the Diagnostic Feedback Report is customized to relevant course objectives. Your suggested action steps (for the next time you teach the course) will be directly related to relevant objectives and the teaching methods most highly associated with student progress on those objectives.