Learning Taxonomy

The Master of Occupational Therapy program has designed its curriculum around a learning taxonomy that progresses the learner through several stages beginning with attainment and remembering of basic knowledge through to the ability to analyze, synthesis, evaluate content as well as to create new knowledge. A summary of Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy is provided below as one example of a learning taxonomy.

Bloom’s Taxonomy

In 1956, Benjamin Bloom headed a group of educational psychologists who developed a classification of levels of intellectual behaviour important in learning. This became a taxonomy including three overlapping domains: the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective. Each of the domains can be utilized through the interaction of media. During the 1990s, Lorin Anderson further developed the Cognitive domain of Bloom’s Taxonomy to reflect a version more closely aligned to modern educational frameworks. The Occupational Therapy Program has adopted this newer version as a guideline for developing student learning expectations and for development of course objectives.

The cognitive learning domain is hierarchical in nature with building from more concrete and basic levels of learning to more abstract and complex. It is represented by knowledge recall at its basic level and then advances through a number of higher intellectual levels including: understanding information, organizing ideas, analyzing and synthesizing data, applying knowledge, choosing among alternatives in problem-solving, evaluating ideas or actions and creating new knowledge. Bloom identified six levels within the cognitive domain, from simple recall or recognition of facts, as the lowest level, through increasingly more complex and abstract mental levels, to the highest order which he classified as evaluation. Recent revisions to Bloom’s work now recognizes knowledge as having four sub-components (factual, conceptual, procedural and metacognitive) and suggests the following progressive levels within the cognitive domain: (a cueing question and verb examples that represent intellectual activity at each level are listed here).

1. **Remembering**: ‘can a student recall or remember the information?’ Example verbs: arrange, define, duplicate, label, list, memorize, name, order, recognize, relate, recall, repeat, reproduce, state

2. **Understanding**: ‘can the student explain ideas or concepts?’ Example verbs: classify, describe, discuss, explain, express, identify, indicate, locate, recognize, report, restate, review, select, translate.

3. **Applying**: ‘can the student use the information in a new way?’ Example verbs: apply, choose, demonstrate, dramatize, employ, illustrate, interpret, operate, practice, schedule, sketch, solve, use, write.

4. **Analyzing**: ‘can the student distinguish between the different parts?’ Example verbs: analyze, appraise, calculate, categorize, compare, contrast, criticize, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, examine, experiment, question, test.

5. **Evaluating**: ‘can the student justify a stand or a decision?’ Example verbs: appraise, argue, assess, attach, choose, compare, defend, estimate, judge, predict, rate, core, select, support, value, evaluate.

6. **Creating**: ‘can the student create new product or point of view?’ Example verbs: arrange, assemble, collect, compose, construct, create, design, develop, formulate, manage, organize, plan, prepare, propose, set up, write.
Affective learning is demonstrated by behaviours indicating attitudes of awareness, interest, attention, concern, responsibility, ability to listen and respond in interactions with others, and ability to demonstrate those attitudinal characteristics or values which are appropriate to the test situation and the field of study. This domain relates to emotions, attitudes, appreciations, and values, such as enjoying, conserving, respecting, and supporting. Verbs applicable to the affective domain include accepts, attempts, challenges, defends, disputes, joins, judges, praises, questions, shares, supports, and volunteers.

**Psychomotor learning** is demonstrated by physical skills; coordination, dexterity, manipulation, grace, strength, speed; actions which demonstrate the fine motor skills such as use of precision instruments or tools, or actions which evidence gross motor skills such as the use of the body in dance or athletic performance. Verbs applicable to the psychomotor domain include bend, grasp, handle, operate, reach, relax, shorten, stretch, write, differentiate (by touch), express (facially), perform (skillfully). The following two pages provide a summary of the taxonomy.

**References**

