

# Designing and Aligning Learning Goals Worksheet

*Teach@CUNY Handbook*



## How to use this worksheet

You may recall the portion of Chapter Three that discussed backwards planning, which involves starting with your learning goals and working backwards from those goals to plan lectures, assignments, and course content. You can use a backwards planning approach to help complete this form, or you might go back and forth between categories as you finalize your course. Choose whatever method helps you get going and don't be afraid to switch up your strategy if you get stuck.

Below is an example of how you might use a backwards planning strategy for an Introduction to Sociology course, followed by a blank template for designing and aligning your own course's learning goals and content. Start by drafting your learning goals, then think about how those relate to your course's learning outcomes and course overview. You may want to have a rough draft of the course schedule with readings, media, activities, assignments, and other content that will help you complete this worksheet. These things may or may not be prescribed by your department, or change as you work through each learning goal.

## Backwards Planning Example for “Introduction to Sociology”

### Learning Goals:

*Statement(s) that clarify what an instructor or program aims to do in a class, facilitation, or assignment. These can be helpful for developing your course description. A typical course may have 3-5 of these outlined in the syllabus.*

This course will:

1. Introduce students to major terms, frameworks, and arguments in the field of sociology.
2. Provide multimodal options that foster critical thinking.
3. Support a dialogic learning process, where the instructor and students learn with and from each other through critical conversations.

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## Learning Outcomes:

*Expectations of what students will be able to do after they've completed a learning sequence, such as skills or competencies gained. A typical course may have 3-5 of these outlined in the syllabus. Sometimes learning outcomes for specific courses are provided by the department.*

Students enrolled in this course will be able to:

1. Define key terms necessary for engaging in sociological research and analysis.
2. Develop sociological arguments in written and oral forms.
3. Explain how a sociological imagination informs their analysis.

## Course Overview:

*Short description of 3-5 sentences that gives readers a brief summary of what enrolled participants can expect.*

This course will introduce students to the field of sociology, its history, and its contemporary role in research and knowledge production. The syllabus covers major topics, questions, and trends within the discipline, including inequality, research methods, and important contributors. Introduction to Sociology is a prerequisite for advanced sociology courses and will prepare students to delve deeper into various sociological subfields and methodologies.

## Sample of Completed Backwards Planning Grid

<b>Learning Goal</b>	<b>Goal:</b> Introduce students to major terms, frameworks, and arguments in the field of sociology.
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Outcome:</b> Define key terms necessary for engaging in sociological research and analysis.
<b>Summative Assessment</b>	<b>Midterm Essay:</b> This assignment will help students summarize key terms and ideas in their own words and practice their critical thinking and analysis.
<b>Formative Assessment</b>	<b>Student-led Critical Inquiry:</b> Instructor will solicit discussion questions from students prior to the class session and present 2-3 questions to facilitate dialogue among students. Students can consider multiple sides of an argument and demonstrate their understanding of key terms.

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Content	<p><b>Textbook Chapter:</b> Chapter 1, <i>Our Sociological World</i>; contextualizes sociology in relation to social science knowledge production.</p> <p><b>Journal Article:</b> “The sociological imagination in challenging times”; argues why sociology is relevant to understanding pressing social issues.</p> <p><b>Podcast:</b> <i>Thinking Allowed</i>, “Sight and Power”; models critical engagement and dialogue to help guide participation during the in-class activity.</p> <p><b>Lecture:</b> “What do sociologists do?”; builds on and summarizes assigned content to help make connections between materials and concepts.</p>
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## Backwards Planning Blank Template

### Learning Goals

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

### Learning Outcomes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

### Course Overview:

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## Blank Backwards Planning Grid

<b>Learning Goal</b>	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	
<b>Summative Assessment</b>	
<b>Formative Assessment</b>	
<b>Content</b>	