

# Goal-Setting and Planning

- Students set two main types of goals: performance goals and learning goals (Taing, Singla, Johnson, & Chang, 2013).
  - A *performance goal* is based on getting a certain amount of work done (e.g. “By the end of this hour, *I will have* written two pages.”).
  - A *learning goal* is based on strengthening your knowledge, understanding or mastery of a concept or skill (e.g. “By the end of this hour, *I will be able to* accurately describe the theory of supply and demand and give three real-world examples.”).
- The most effective academic goals are *learning goals* (Payne, Youngcourt, & Beaubien, 2007).
- Strong learning goals have four components: **Concept(s)**, **Action**, **Standard**, and **Timeframe**. This acronym spells CAST, so we call these **CAST Goals** (McCardle et al., 2017).

## LET'S LOOK AT EACH COMPONENT OF A CAST GOAL...

### Concept(s)

- **Concepts** refer to specific course content you will work with or master, such as terms, methods, formulas, or big ideas.
  - Aim to be as specific as possible! For example, "supply and demand" is more informative than "Economics" or "Chapter 6."
- Identifying specific concepts will help focus your attention and choose appropriate actions to take.
- Note that you may need to investigate your task a little more if you are having trouble specifying concepts!

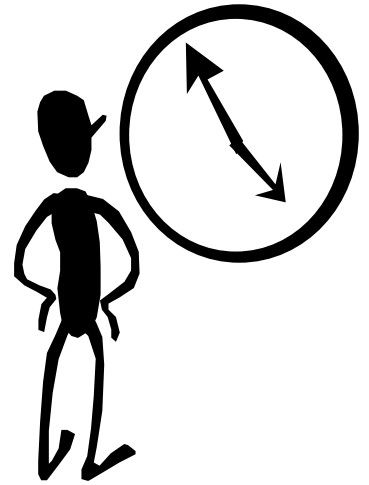


### Action

- The **action** of a goal specifies the kind of thinking you will engage to work with the information.
- Actions need to be more specific and targeted than broad actions like, “read”, “review”, or “study”. Those words don’t really describe what the tasks of reading, reviewing, or studying look like, or how to do them effectively.
- Refer to Bloom’s Taxonomy Verbs for ideas of good action words.
  - An example of using effective actions might be “I will *assemble* my highlighted notes on supply and demand into an outline for the paper, *explaining* them in my own words.”
- Good actions will help you to choose appropriate strategies for your task.

## Standard

- A goal's **standard** will be how you measure, in a concrete way, what you *learned* in your study session.
- Your standard marks the difference between a less-effective performance goal and a more-effective learning goal.
- You can phrase your standard in terms of what you should *be able to do* once you have completed your study session. For example, "By the end of the study session, *I will be able to* clearly articulate the three main arguments I have chosen to support my thesis, and for each argument, give a real-world example where this occurred."



## Timeframe

- A **timeframe** will help you plan when you will accomplish your goal and keep you accountable.
- Set a definite start and end time (e.g., "On Wednesday from 3-5 pm...").
- Set a goal for a maximum of two hours to not overload yourself. Some students find even shorter time frames work better.
- Setting a time frame allows you to monitor how much work you can get done in that amount of time. This can help you predict how long similar tasks will take in the future.

## LET'S PUT THESE COMPONENTS TOGETHER...



"On Wednesday, from 3-5 pm (**time frame**), I will highlight the key concepts from my lecture notes on Supply and Demand (**concept**) that are relevant to my paper's thesis, and assemble the bits I have highlighted into an outline for the paper, explaining them in my own words (**action**). By the end of the study session, I will be able to clearly articulate the three main arguments I have chosen to support my thesis, and for each argument, give a real-world example where this occurred (**standard**)."

### For more Information:

- Hadwin, A.F., & Webster, E.A. (2013). Calibration in goal setting: examining the nature of judgments of confidence. *Learning and Instruction*, 24, 37-47. doi: 10.1016/j.learninstruc.2012.10.001
- McCardle, L., Webster, E.A., Haffey, A., & Hadwin, A.F. (2017). Examining students' self-set goals for self-regulated learning: Goal properties and patterns. *Studies in Higher Education*, 42(11), 2153-2169. doi: 10.1080/03075079.2015.1135117
- Payne, S.C., Youngcourt, S.S., & Beaubien, J.M. (2007). A meta-analytic examination of the goal orientation nomological net. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92 (1), p. 128-150. doi: 10.1037/0021-9010.92.1.128
- Taing, M.U, Smith, T., Singla, N., Johnson, R.E., & Chang, C.H. (2013). The relationship between learning goal orientation, goal setting, and performance: a longitudinal study. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 2013 (43), 1668-1675. doi: 10.1111/jasp.12119
- Winne, P.H., & Hadwin, A.F. (1998). Studying as self-regulated engagement in learning. In D. Hacker, J. Dunlosky, & A. Graesser (Eds.), *Metacognition in Educational Theory and Practice* (277-304). Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Adapted from ED-D 101 Course Materials; Email [edd101@uvic.ca](mailto:edd101@uvic.ca) for further information