Chapter 4
The Cognitive, Affective, and Psychomotor Domains: The Taxonomy of the Traditional Learner

Learning Objectives. The Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, better known as Bloom’s Taxonomy, is a classification system that governs how learning objectives are designed, implemented and assessed. First proposed in 1956, Benjamin Bloom began his scrutiny into educational objectives by exploring the cognitive domain (which will serve as the focus for this chapter). Later, with other colleagues including Lorin W. Krathwohl and S. R. Kibler, he considered the affective and psychomotor domains to round out his body of study.

Bloom’s taxonomy differentiates six levels of teaching and learning: (1) knowledge, (2) comprehension, (3) application, (4) analysis, (5) synthesis, and (6) evaluation. This chapter offers a perspective for developing instruction purposely targeting the traditional learner. Specifically, the reader will understand:

• The characteristics of the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.
• The stages of Bloom’s Taxonomy and its application to teaching and learning.
• The uses of the Taxonomy to plan and deliver instruction in the classroom or at a distance.
• Key instructional technologies supporting Bloom’s Taxonomy and the cognitive domain of the traditional learner.

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One of the initial goals for building a taxonomy was to reduce the labor-intensive task of preparing questions for comprehensive examinations. Researchers explored several possible methods of classifying behaviors believed to be important for learning. The framework eventually produced taxonomies for three domains:

- **Cognitive domain** – focusing on knowledge, skills, and competencies and consisting of six levels;
- **Affective domain** – focusing on attitudes, feelings, and emotions and consisting of five levels; and,
- **Psychomotor domain**

Lesson Plan Template. Refer to Appendix A, Traditional Learner Lesson Plan Template as the chapter discusses Focus on Learning as depicted in Figure 1.

**INTRODUCTION**

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