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**From:** Dillon, Robert T  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 03, 2016 3:29 PM  
**To:** Ferguson, Douglas A <FergusonD@cofc.edu>  
**Cc:** McGee, Brian <McgeeB@cofc.edu>; Lewis, Simon Keith <LewisS@cofc.edu>; SSMfaculty <SSMfaculty@cofc.edu>  
**Subject:** RE: clarification request

Dear Dr. Ferguson,

The learning outcomes as I have stated them on my syllabus are connected to genetics as a transitive verb is connected to its direct object.

Briefly, it is the business of a University to impart to the men whom it serves the right thought of the world. In the science departments\* of such universities, Wilson's "right thought" is understood to mean "the scientific method."

Science is the construction of testable hypotheses about the natural world. And (especially in a laboratory) the focus must be on the verb, "to construct." Note that the verb "to construct" is transitive; something must be constructed. So in Genetics 305L, we construct testable hypotheses about the mechanisms of heredity.

Over the course of 14 weeks, students in Genetics 305L are expected to submit 10 lab reports and take two practical quizzes evaluating their ability to construct testable hypotheses about heredity. This is clearly stated on my syllabus.

**But the subject matter always follows, never leads.** The learning outcome is the verb, not the noun.

If you have any further questions, I am of course,  
Standing by,  
Rob

\*Note that the qualities of "right thought" differ among academic departments. So in science, right thought is rigorous, critical, systematic and precise. In poetry, right thought is creative, sensitive, intuitive and metaphorical. This theme is developed more fully in my teaching philosophy, which I recommend to all my students, and (similarly) to you:

<http://dillonr.people.cofc.edu/Dillon-swims-with-snails.pdf>

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