

Outcomes & Assessment Handbook

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Outcomes & Assessment Overview

Cuyamaca Mission, Vision, & Values

Mission: Cuyamaca College advances equity and social justice through student-centered and innovative approaches to education. We strive to create unique and meaningful learning experiences that build upon the strengths and socio-cultural experiences of our diverse student population and the communities we serve by providing programs that lead to certificates, degrees, transfer, career opportunities, and ultimately social and economic mobility.

Vision: Equity, Excellence, and Social Justice through Education

Values:

- Student-centered
- Equity
- Student Success
- Innovation
- Excellence
- Social Justice
- Community

Cuyamaca Strategic Plan 2022-2028

Cuyamaca College structures its planning processes and engages the college community by pursuing the following priorities, which form the foundation of the 2022-2028 Strategic Plan:

- Increase equitable access
- Eliminate equity gaps in course success
- Increase persistence and eliminate equity gaps
- Increase completion and eliminate equity gaps
- Increase hiring and retention of diverse employees to reflect the students and communities we serve

Outcomes & Assessment Committee (OAC) Charge & Composition

Charge:
The Committee is charged with advancing a culture of assessment across the college, and with supporting the use of assessment data in continuous improvement processes at the course, program, service area, and institutional levels. To accomplish this, the committee is responsible for the following:

1. Maintain outcomes assessment schedules for all instructional programs and student service areas
2. Inform faculty leaders and relevant administrators of outcomes assessment needs by instructional program and/or service area
3. Follow up with faculty to ensure on-time and thorough completion of outcomes assessment, including the dialogue and follow up processes
4. Create and maintain institutional processes for efficient and useful outcomes assessment
5. Manage collection and input of learning outcomes data into the campus management system
6. Facilitate communication about outcomes assessment data to faculty and the campus community as a whole
7. Consult with faculty members and service area leaders about all aspects of learning outcomes and assessment, from the creation of outcomes statements, to successful practices for assessment
8. Host professional development opportunities about outcomes and assessment at the department, service area and college-wide levels
9. Develop and pilot innovative practices in learning outcomes assessment
10. Support the incorporation of student experience, input and voice in outcomes assessment

Committee members will be responsible for staying up-to-date with the status of outcomes assessment in their designated instructional or service area. Committee member liaisons will specifically manage communication and support with faculty and service area leaders to support on-time assessment. Overall, the committee serves as a channel for communication, planning, institutional dialogue regarding continuous quality improvement, and coordination of assessment activities between departments and organizational units of Student Services, Instruction and Administrative Services. The Outcomes and Assessment Committee is a sub-committee of the Academic Senate,

and will regularly work with Academic Senate, the Program Review Steering Committee, and the Institutional Effectiveness Council.

Meeting Schedule:
Monthly, third Monday of the month, 3:00-4:00 p.m via zoom

Chair(s):
Sr. Dean, Institutional Effectiveness, Success, and Equity/Accreditation Liaison Officer
SLO Coordinator

Composition:
2 Instructional Faculty Representatives from MSE
2 Instructional Faculty Representatives from AHSS
1 Instructional Faculty Representative from CE
1 Instructional Faculty Representative AKHE
1 Counseling Faculty Representative from Student Services
1 Representative from LTR
1 Representative from Student Services (Administrative)
1 Classified Staff Representative
1 Student Representative

*Note: at least one of the above faculty representatives should be certified to teach online

Resources:
Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Research & Planning Specialist
TracDat Coordinator
Accreditation Co-Chair
Articulation Officer

Why Do We Assess Outcomes?

Instructional programs and courses, service area departments, administrative units, and the college as a whole all establish outcomes that reflect their goals. On the instructional side, outcomes articulate the most significant skills that students gain from their courses and programs of study–students should be able to identify those skills and reflect on them throughout their educational journeys. Additionally, outcomes can help clarify and direct course and program improvements. In service areas, outcomes can articulate the most significant work of the department or program in the interest of student success and equity. Outcomes should reflect the most pressing, goal-oriented work of all areas of the college.

We assess outcomes to find out if what we are doing is achieving the results we expect, inform and focus improvements to our instruction and services, and align our work with the mission, vision, and values of the institution. Reflective practices around assessment, such as the development of equitable and innovative assessments of student learning, collective assessment practices, project-based assessment, and work with disaggregated program data, are all potentially powerful ways to grow as a college and as a community. Ideally, assessment results can be used to design pathways for course and program improvement, student success, and equitable outcomes.

Data driven assessment and reflection is the way the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) requires schools to make improvements to their programs.

ACCJC Standards met by Outcomes Assessment:

- **Standard 2.2:** Academic programs are designed to support equitable attainment of student learning outcomes and achievement of educational goals.
- **Standard 2.4:** The institution establishes student learning outcomes at the course, program, and institutional level. Learning outcomes reflect relevant discipline and industry standards as appropriate, and are consistently communicated to students.
- **Standard 2.10**: Faculty and others responsible for student learning regularly assess students' attainment of identified learning outcomes at the course, program, and institutional level. Analysis of assessment results supports institutional and curricular improvements that promote equitable attainment of outcomes.

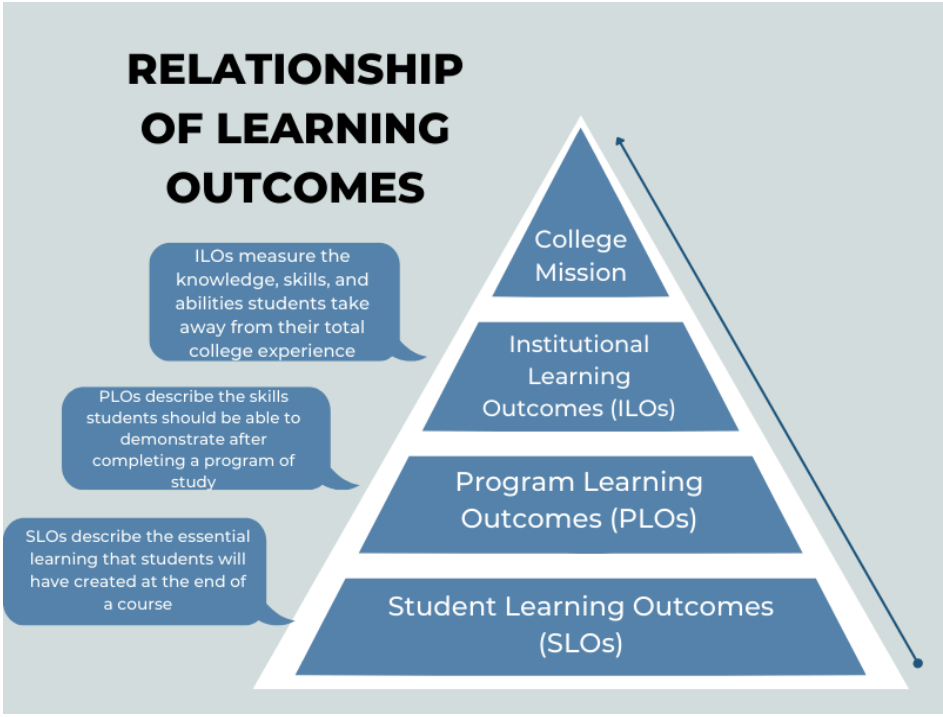
- **Standard 2.11**: The institution systematically conducts program review and learning outcomes assessment that advances the institutional mission and improves equitable student achievement.

Relationships Between Outcomes

Instruction: SLOs, PLOs, and ILOs

- Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) exist at the course level and describe the essential learning that students will have created at the end of each course.
    - SLOs should link to the Program Learning Outcomes for courses within a specific program or across an Academic & Career Pathway (ACP).
- Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) describe the skills students should be able to demonstrate after completing a degree or certificate. Over the last few years, we have initiated PLOs by ACP, wherein ACPs are encouraged to share some or all PLO statements.
    - PLOs should link to the Institutional Learning Outcomes for Cuyamaca College.
- Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) measure the knowledge, skills, and abilities students take away from their total college experience.
    - ILOs should support the Cuyamaca College mission, vision, and values.

The diagram shows how learning outcomes at all levels correspond to and support the College Mission. Course SLOs are most numerous and are the foundation upon which the various PLOs are built; both contribute to and reinforce the Institutional Learning Outcomes which support the mission of the college.



Student and Instructional Services: SLOs/SAOs, Program Review, and ILOs.

Student and Instructional Services areas are welcome to develop and assess SLOs or SAOs, or a combination of both.

- Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) describe what a student will know or be able to do after interacting with your service or course.
- Service Area Outcomes (SAOs) describe what your service area will do in the interest of supporting student success and equity.
    - Ideally, SLOs and SAOs should constitute assessable steps toward achieving the goals from each area's annual and comprehensive program reviews and should map to the college's ILOs.

Who to contact for support?

Need support with writing or creating an assessment plans for your course SLOs?

Contact: Tania N. Jabour
English Instructor and SLOA Co-Coordinator
Tania.Jabour@gcccd.edu

Rachel Polakoski
Math Instructor and SLOA Co-Coordinator
Rachel.Polakoski@gcccd.edu

Need support with Nuventive Improve (Formly TracDat)?

Contact: Heyley Troyer
Institutional Effectiveness Specialist and Tracdat Administrator
(619) 660-4579
heyley.troyer@gcccd.edu

Need support with submitting SLO data or developing an assessment plan?

Contact: Your department's Faculty Liaison

Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

What is an Institutional Learning Outcome (ILO)?

Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) articulate the competencies that students develop over their entire experience at the college, including in their courses, during their programs of study, and through interactions with instructional and/or student services. At the broadest level, they measure the knowledge, skills, and abilities that students take away from their total college experience.

ILOs should be derived from and reflect the mission, vision, and goals of the college, and they should have a role in advancing the college's strategic plan. Course-level and service area-specific student learning outcomes, program learning outcomes, and service area outcomes all map up to ILOs.

Cuyamaca College Institutional Learning Outcomes

(Approved by the Academic Senate and College Council in Spring 2019)

Students who complete a program of study leading to an associate degree or Certificate of Achievement are expected to achieve the following Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs). (Reference: ACCJC Standard II.A.11)

1. **Communication Competency:** Students will communicate information, arguments and opinions effectively to different audiences, through various modalities, including listening, speaking and writing.
2. **Critical Thinking Competency:** Students will analyze and evaluate qualitative and quantitative information, and synthesize findings to make decisions within various contexts.
3. **Cultural Competency:** Students will interact effectively with others, taking into account their diverse backgrounds, and work well in cross-cultural situations.
4. **Professional Responsibility:** Students will practice ethical and civil conduct in professional environments, as well as resolve conflicts and build alliances.

Assessment of ILOs

Cuyamaca College assesses ILOs two ways, through indirect, qualitative assessment, and through interdisciplinary direct assessment.

Indirect Assessment: Cuyamaca College has surveyed graduating students about their learning experiences throughout their time at the college. The survey asked students to report their skill levels corresponding to the college's ILOs and offered them the opportunity to answer open-ended questions about their challenges and successes at the college. The responses to the open-ended questions yielded valuable insights about student experiences, which the college incorporated into institution-wide planning meetings.

Direct Assessment: Cuyamaca College has directly assessed ILOs through a team of interdisciplinary faculty who developed a common method of assessment (assignment prompt and rubric) specific to one of the College's ILOs. Faculty then facilitated that assessment across participating courses and collectively analyzed assessment results. For more information about the results of that pilot project specifically from the 2020-21 academic year, please see this ILO Direct Assessment Report. The college hopes to scale the project in future semesters to directly assess other ILOs, and particularly to build upon the findings of the initial project to further the practice of inclusive and equitable assessments college-wide.

Instructional Outcomes & Assessment

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

What is a Student Learning Outcome (SLO)?

SLO statements describe significant and essential learning that students will have created, and of which students can reliably demonstrate mastery at the conclusion of a course.

Student Learning Outcomes should satisfy certain criteria:

- SLOs need to be expressed using active verbs
- SLOs are linked to Program Learning Outcomes, which in turn are linked to the Institution's Strategic Plan
- SLOs need to be measurable
- SLOs state a core skill or ability that can be generalized across multiple courses, applied to a student's future academic goals, and used in work-based settings.

A Student Learning Outcome is not a course objective. The difference between a Student Learning Outcome and a course objective is that an SLO is broad, where a course objective is specific. Course objectives are granular and can include knowledge acquisition. SLOs are holistic and are focused on the demonstration of complex skills that are derived from the more specific, granular skills and knowledge encompassed by course objectives. This is why courses are expected to have many objectives that are combined to only a few SLOs.

Faculty Liaison Model

Faculty liaisons are members serving on the Outcomes & Assessment Committee (OAC). Faculty liaisons act as resources and support persons to ensure timely, meaningful assessment for their assigned departments. Each faculty liaison is paired with departments on campus and offers regular check-ins with department chairs to provide assistance in SLO planning and assessment. Faculty liaisons act as representatives for their assigned departments and share needs and other relevant

feedback with OAC. To find out who is your faculty liaison, please consult the faculty liaison grid.

Sample Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) Statements:

- English: Synthesize material from multiple texts to create and support an argument in response to a prompt.
- Ornamental Horticulture: Create biddable landscape architecture drawings using industry graphic standards.
- Computer and Information Science: Develop a database following common design principles including normalization, appropriate primary and foreign keys in table relationships, lookup fields, input masks, and data validation rules.
- Political Science: Analyze existing applications of political science to topics such as comparative institutions, behavior, institutional change, and comparative public policy.
- Math: Use analytical, numerical, and graphical methods to solve statistics problems.
- Chemistry: Recognize functional groups of organic compounds and predict their reactivity based on chemical and physical properties.

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

When do we assess SLOs?

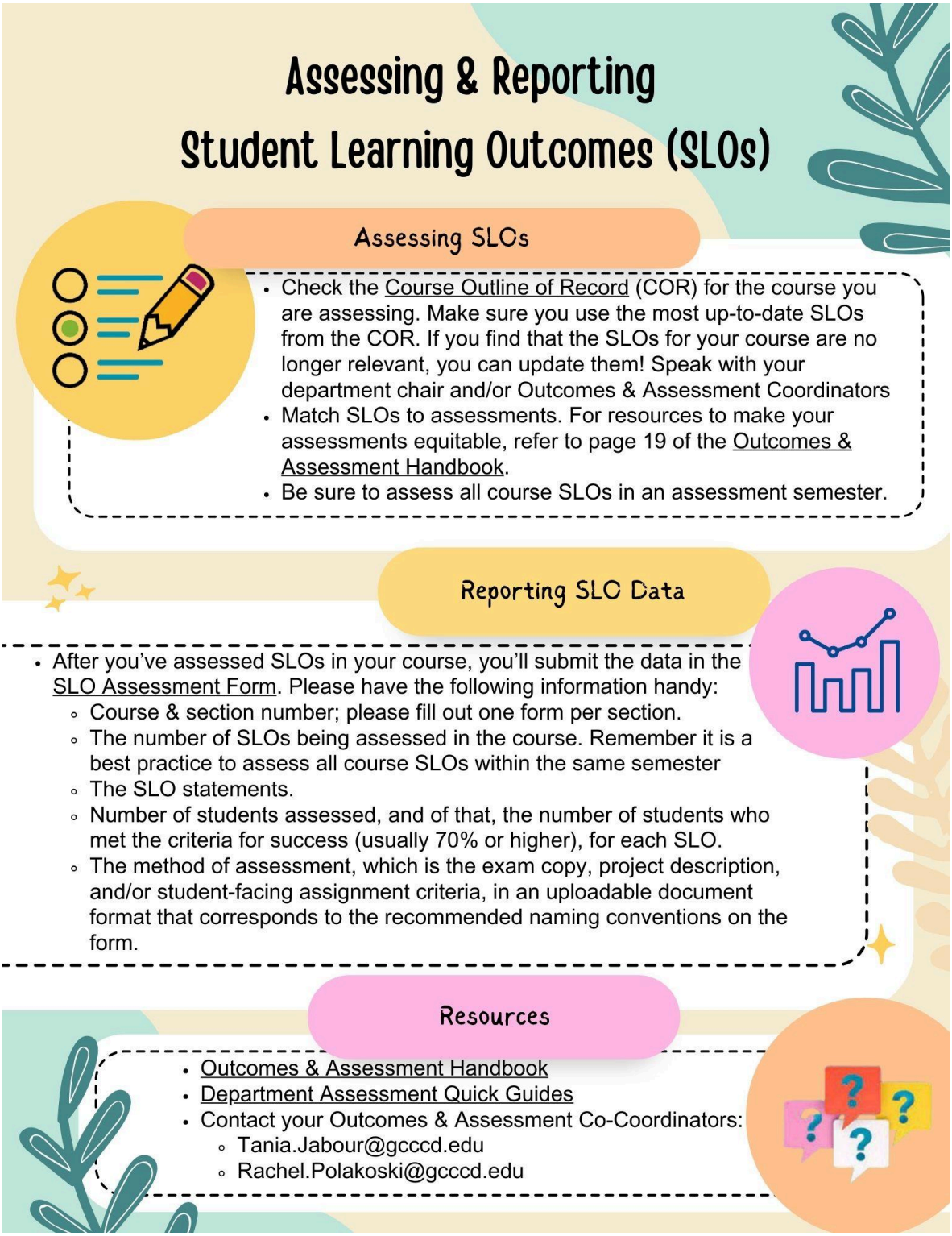
Student Learning Outcomes are assessed on a cycle similar to that of the Program Review cycle. Student Learning Outcomes need to be assessed at least once every four years and they can be done in separate semesters to ease the workload needed to properly assess each course. Faculty should always ensure that the SLOs being assessed are up-to-date and match the Course Outline of Record for the course being assessed. It is also recommended that when a course is assessed, all SLOs for that course are assessed within the same semester. The chair of each department should establish an assessment plan that accounts for assessing SLOs for each course on the four year cycle, such as in the template below.

To see when the courses for your department were last assessed, view the *SLO Assessment Dashboards* on the Learning Outcomes & Assessment website.

Department Chair Beginning of the Semester Checklist for SLO Assessment

Assessing SLOs - Department Chair Beginning of the Semester Checklist

One-page Handout on Assessing & Reporting SLOs



Instructional Assessment Plan Template

The following Department SLO Assessment Plan & Student Outcomes Assessment Plan Template can be used as an internal document to help plan your area's assessment cycle and can be submitted with your annual and/or comprehensive program reviews as supporting documentation.

Department-Level SLO Assessment Plan

The below template is a partial model and can be adjusted to reflect the course offerings of any department. It is highly recommended that instructors assess all SLOs in a course in an assessment semester. Another recommendation is to map the assessment schedule onto the comprehensive review cycle, and assess all courses between comprehensive reviews.

Department: _____
Last Comprehensive Program Review: _____
Next Comprehensive Program Review: _____

Course	F23	SP24	F24	SP25	F25	SP26	F26	SP27
ENGL 120 (Comp)	X		X		X		X	Conduct data analysis and PLO assessment to prepare for Comprehensive Program Review in Fall
ENGL 124 (Adv Comp)		X		X		X		
ENGL 221 (Brit Lit 1)	X				X			
ENGL 222 (Brit Lit 2)		X				X		
ENGL 231 (Am Lit 1)			X				X	
ENGL 232 (Am Lit 2)				X				
ENGL 272** (World Lit 2)	Assess as able							
ENGL 217** (Fant/SciFi)	Assess as able							

*In this model, the spring '27 semester is reserved for calculating PLO assessment results and reflecting on data for the next comprehensive program review.
**These classes have a high likelihood of being cut due to low enrollment and should be assessed each time they are able to run.

Course-Level SLO Assessment Plan

Note: Repeat for each course!

Course: _____

Student Learning Outcome Statement	**Assessment Method or Tool**	**Mapped to PLO(s):** **(If Applicable)**	**Mapped to ILOs** **(if applicable)**	**Data Collection** **(Specify Semesters)**
Example: ENGL 124 SLO 1: Analyze the arguments and underlying assumptions in complex and nontraditional texts, explaining the relationships between arguments and the ways writers advance their claims.	Rhetorical Analysis Essay Unit	PLO 2: Apply discipline-specific theories about language and communication to students' own practice or work.	ILO 1: Communication Competency and ILO 2: Critical Thinking Competency.	Spring 2023, 2024, and 2025
SLO 1: Write outcome statement here.				
SLO 2: Write outcome statement here.				
SLO 3: Write outcome statement here.				

Communication Plan

For each outcome statement: How will you <u>communicate</u> outcomes assessment results to the larger group and <u>incorporate those results</u> into your department discussions, processes, and practices.	
SLO 1: Write outcome statement here.	Summarize communication and results/assessment incorporation plan here.
SLO 2: Write outcome statement here.	
SLO 3: Write outcome statement here.	

The Department SLO Assessment Plan is used to designate a timeline for all courses within the department to be assessed over a four year cycle. To create your assessment plan using this model, take the following steps:

1. Adjust the timeline to map onto your comprehensive review cycle
2. List all of your active courses
3. Determine the best schedule to assess them over the course of four years, given the needs of your department.
4. Allow time for the reflection, follow-up and implementation pieces as you use the SLO data to make course level and programmatic adjustments.

The Student Outcomes Assessment Plan is for each course within the department. This course-level planning template helps faculty who are teaching courses to be assessed determine assessment methods and identify SLO links to PLOs and Program Review Goals. A Communication Plan is also recommended.

Different ways to Assess Learning Outcomes

Direct Assessments	**Indirect Assessments**
● Essays ● Exams ● Lab reports ● Field work or internship performance ● Projects ● Research assignments ● Case study analysis ● Oral presentations ● Performances or demonstrations of learning ● Portfolios ● Video production ● Materials creation	● Surveys ● External Reviewers ● Licensure exam results ● Student exit interview/surveys ● Student self-reflections on learning and/or metacognitive assessments

Using Canvas Outcomes to Assess SLOs

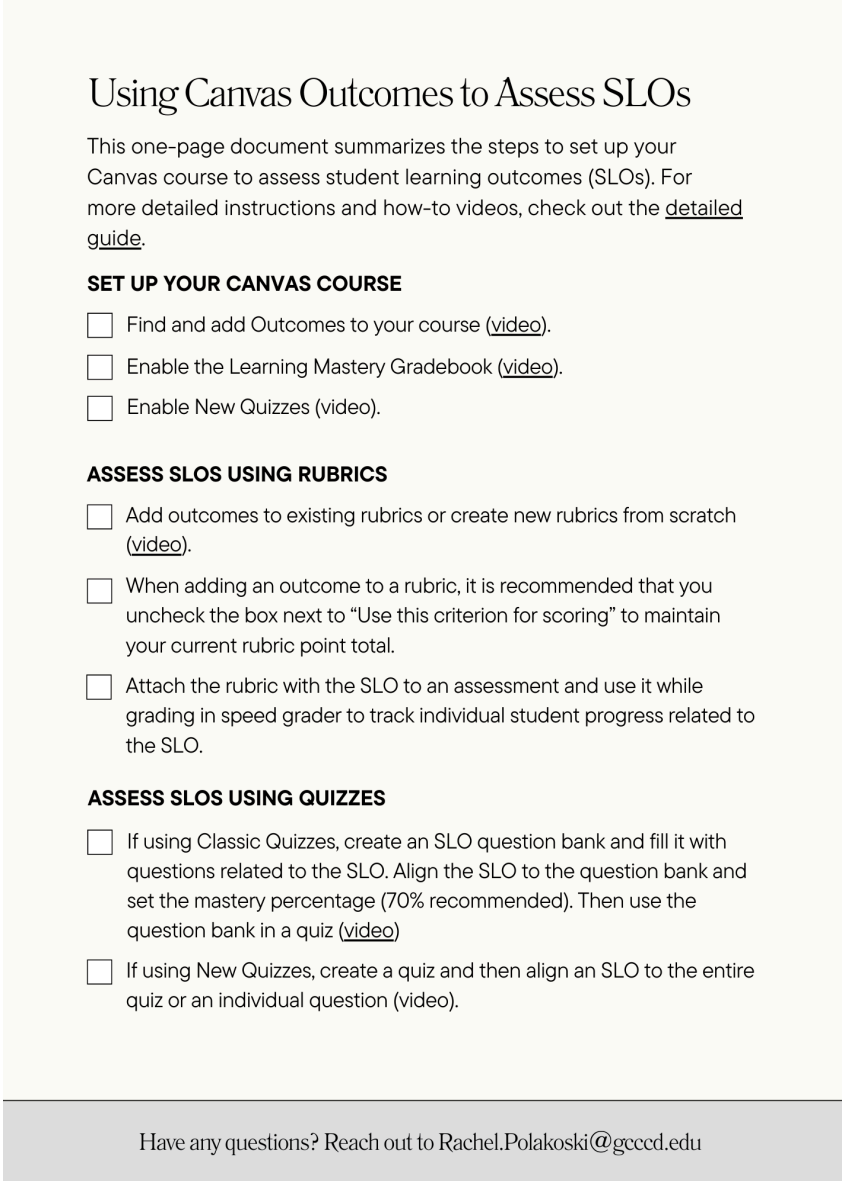
The Canvas Outcomes feature offers an efficient way for faculty to assess and collect course-specific data for Student Learning Outcomes. Benefits include real-time data collection during grading in Canvas, automatic charts and reports, and ease of sharing SLO assessments with other faculty in the same department.

Faculty can easily assess SLOs by adding outcomes to grading rubrics or quizzes. Outcome assessment results can be viewed using the Learning Mastery gradebook in Canvas.

Canvas Outcomes data is aggregated and presented in a Nuventive dashboard, making SLO data reporting easy and convenient.

Resources for Using the Canvas Outcomes Feature to Assess SLOs:

- Detailed Guide for Assessing SLOs using Canvas Outcomes
- One-Page Resource for Assessing SLOs using Canvas Outcomes



Using Canvas Outcomes to Assess SLOs

This one-page document summarizes the steps to set up your Canvas course to assess student learning outcomes (SLOs). For more detailed instructions and how-to videos, check out the detailed guide.

SET UP YOUR CANVAS COURSE

- ☐ Find and add Outcomes to your course (video).
- ☐ Enable the Learning Mastery Gradebook (video).
- ☐ Enable New Quizzes (video).

ASSESS SLOS USING RUBRICS

- ☐ Add outcomes to existing rubrics or create new rubrics from scratch (video).
- ☐ When adding an outcome to a rubric, it is recommended that you uncheck the box next to "Use this criterion for scoring" to maintain your current rubric point total.
- ☐ Attach the rubric with the SLO to an assessment and use it while grading in speed grader to track individual student progress related to the SLO.

ASSESS SLOS USING QUIZZES

- ☐ If using Classic Quizzes, create an SLO question bank and fill it with questions related to the SLO. Align the SLO to the question bank and set the mastery percentage (70% recommended). Then use the question bank in a quiz (video)
- ☐ If using New Quizzes, create a quiz and then align an SLO to the entire quiz or an individual question (video).

Have any questions? Reach out to Rachel.Polakoski@gcccd.edu

How to Submit SLO Data

Complete the Student Learning Outcome Assessment Entry Form to submit SLO data. SLO data can be submitted at any time. However, it is recommended for faculty to submit SLO data at the end of the semester coinciding with the grade deadline. This ensures timely reporting of data.

SLO Assessment Entry Form Template

When faculty are ready to submit SLO data via the Student Learning Outcome Assessment Entry Form, they should have the following information handy:

1. Course and section number; please fill out one form per section.
2. The number of SLOs being assessed in the course. Remember it is a best practice to assess all course SLOs in an assessment semester.
3. The updated SLO statements. It is recommended that faculty check posted Course Outlines to ensure they are assessing the most updated and accurate SLO statements.
4. Number of students assessed, and of that, the number of students who met the criteria for success (usually 70% or higher), for each SLO.
5. The method of assessment, which is the exam copy, project description, and/or student-facing assignment criteria, in an uploadable document format.

Here are the questions included on the Student Learning Outcome Assessment Form for Instruction:

Student Learning Outcome Assessment Entry Form

Please fill out the following questions related to your Student Learning Outcome (SLO) assessment. Only one course and section will be able to be assessed at a time. Repeat the entry form if you have more than one course or section. Before starting to complete this form, please have all Method of Assessment (MOA) documents ready to be uploaded in the last section of this form.

- Instructor's Name
- Instructor's GCCCD Email Address
- Discipline *(Mark one; Drop-down menu of departments)*
- Semester Assessed *(Mark one; drop-down menu of semesters)*
- Instructional Modality *(Mark one; options are online, hybrid, or face-to-face)*
- Course Number Assessed
- Section Number Assessed
- Is the course cross-listed? *(Note: cross-listed courses are the same class/section students can use for credit in more than one department or program. Example: ENGL 238/ETHN 238)*
- Number of SLOs Assessed *(Note: this is the total number of Student Learning Outcome statements being assessed in the section for the semester. If a course has 3 SLOs, ideally, the faculty member is inputting assessment data for all three.)*
- **FOR EACH SLO STATEMENT:**
    - Which SLO Number *(Note: this can be found on the Course Outline of Record)*

- Write the SLO Statement *(Note: this can be found on the most current course outline of record. SLOs are updated frequently. Check to ensure you are assessing the most current version.)*
- Number of Students Assessed
- Number of Students Successful
- Method of Assessment (Mark one; drop-down menu)
- Description of Method of Assessment (if more than one was used)
- Criteria for Success (usually this is 70% or higher)

Reflection (Note: this is a few sentences about successes and challenges regarding student learning in the course or section, and this part is required for accreditation and meaningful when chairs and program coordinators refer to reflections for course and program improvements!)

Finally, upload the Method of Assessment document(s) and submit the form.
Note the file naming conventions suggested on the form before uploading.

Some department chairs request that SLO data be submitted to the chair/coordinator rather than via the SLO Assessment Entry Form. Faculty who have questions about whether they should assess SLOs in any given semester or how they should submit SLO data can inquire with the department chair/coordinator, or can reach out to the SLO Co-Coordinators for assistance with any aspect of the assessment process.

Equity in Instructional Assessment

A timed exam in a STEM class or a proctored writing prompt in a language class only allows students one way to share their knowledge. Additionally, the time constraint on such forms of assessment often adds undue stress and privileges certain forms of cognitive ability, like the ability to process information quickly. These forms of assessment are common in strictly academic settings, but they may not be equitable or even aligned with career/job expectations: how often will students be asked to recall knowledge in the workplace under such time constraints and without any resources? Faculty are encouraged to look beyond traditional, academic assessment methods and be innovative in their methods for assessing student learning.

If assessment is about demonstrating learning, then faculty should allow students the space to show their knowledge. Students are highly varied in customs, identity, understanding, and ability, and all of those attributes are shaped by culture, which affects learning. Faculty have the opportunity to create meaningful, equity-minded, culturally responsive assessments of student learning.

Why Equitable Grading?

Traditional grading originated in the late 1700s to efficiently move large numbers of students through the system, most of whom identified as White, middle-to-upper class males. Despite the

change in student demographics and the community college mission, the traditional grading system has largely remained intact. Consequently, grades have disproportionately harmed historically underrepresented students, as they invite implicit bias, rely on a subjective definition of merit, and lead to an increase in stress and decrease in motivation, which can lead to disengagement and disempowerment for the most vulnerable students.

Conversely, by adopting equitable grading strategies, the data show a reduction in equity gaps for Black, Latinx, and Middle Eastern students. Qualitatively, students expressed appreciation for clear expectations and feedback, felt validated because they didn't fear failure, felt more confident and safer in the classroom environment, experienced a heightened sense of motivation, engagement, and classroom community, and expressed a shift in motivation from external (i.e. grades) to internal (i.e. writing improvement). Inherent in equitable grading is the notion that the act of grading is a form of power; therefore, sharing power in the classroom by equitizing grading can contribute to a decolonized classroom space resulting in a reduction in equity gaps.

For references and more information regarding the above information, please refer to Bri Brown (*formerly Kuhn*), Get the "F" Outta Here: Exploring Contract Grading as a Decolonizing and Equity-Minded Assessment Practice in Composition Classrooms (2020).

Equitable Grading Strategies

There are many ways to incorporate elements of equitable grading. When doing so, it is helpful to consider who may be privileged or harmed by the more traditional grading policies or practices (i.e., who is impacted most by an inflexible late policy?). By asking these questions, it may shed light on which policies or practices may be updated. Some approaches that faculty may take to equitize their grading practices include:

- Adopting a flexible late work policy
- Adopting a revision policy wherein students can resubmit work for additional points or feedback
    - Helpful Canvas Guides:
        - Changing the status of a submission
        - Reassigning an assignment
        - Quiz Settings
        - How to Drop the Lowest Score in a Group
- Maintaining flexibility for students who learn at different speeds or in different ways
- Fostering a supporting, non-competitive community
- Putting an emphasis on feedback
- Allowing space for student voice and choice in the curriculum
- Allowing space for student voice in their grade. See this great example of student self-assessment.
- Aligning assessments to student learning outcomes

- Leveraging peer review activities. Here is a great article on calibrated peer review.
    - Canvas Guides:
        - Create a peer review assignment
        - Instructor guide for using peer reviews
        - Instructor guide for seeing peer review work by students
        - Student guide for submitting a peer review
        - Student guide for using the annotations feature

Equitable Grading Systems

In addition to the strategies above, there are also a variety of system-wide approaches to equitable grading, (most of which include the strategies above) including:

- ***Contract Grading:*** students select the grade they hope to earn in the class and follow the path set out by the instructor in order to earn that grade.
    - Grading Contract Examples:
        - Black Literature by Bri Brown from Cuyamaca College
        - Contracts from multiple English classes at the CCC from a presentation at the 2018 Student Success Conference
        - Contracts from three different classes from SUNY Cortland
        - Technologies of Text class contract with Ryan Cordell. They also wrote a great article on their process with more details titled "How I Contract Grade"
        - 21st Century Literacies class contract with Cathy Davidson from Crowdsourcing Ungrading. The contracts are at the very bottom of the article.
        - Introduction to Biology by Melody Schmid from Butte College
        - An example of a grading contract can be found here.
        - English: Advanced Composition with Bri Brown from Cuyamaca College
- ***Specifications Grading:*** "[C]ourse grades are based on the bundles of assignments and tests that students complete at a pass/satisfactory level. Bundles that require more work, more challenging work, or both earn students higher grades. No more points to painstakingly allocate and haggle over with students. By choosing the bundle they want to complete, students select the final grade they want to earn, taking into account their motivation, time available, grade point needs and commitment." - Linda B. Nilson from Inside Higher Ed
    - Linda Nilson explains Specifications Grading in detail
    - Example Specifications Grading Syllabus by Michelle Pacansky-Brock
- ***Labor-based Grading***: focuses on learning as an iterative process and assumes that gaining new skills requires practice. In a labor-based contract, grades are determined by the amount of work students complete rather than evaluation of that work. In this process, the instructor provides feedback on assignments and students are asked to revise based on the feedback. It is this process of revision and improvement that

determines a student's final grade. By focusing students on the revision process, we allow them to make mistakes without penalty. This willingness to try (and fail) is essential to the learning process. Because the student's focus is on the work of revision (rather than the grade), they are able to focus more directly on the feedback provided by the instructor.
    - Asao Inoue explains labor-based grading in detail
    - Example labor-based grading syllabus by Asao Inoue
- ***Ungrading:*** Ungrading, by definition, isn't a rigid set of protocols. It is a form of grading that is flexible enough to meet the needs of the students, the instructor, and the course.
    - Request Susan Blum's video detailing Ungrading
    - Jesse Stommel's Ungrading Syllabus
    - Setting up grading schemes in your course
    - Bri Brown's Black Literature Ungrading Syllabus
    - Susan Blum's Ungrading book

Culturally responsive assessment is:

- mindful of the student populations the institution serves,
- using language that is appropriate for all students when developing learning outcomes,
- acknowledging students' differences in the planning phases of an assessment effort,
- developing and/or using assessment tools that are appropriate for different students, and
- being intentional in using assessment results to improve learning for all students.

Resources for Equity in Instructional Assessment:

- Equity and Assessment: Moving Towards Culturally Responsive Assessment
- Practicing Equity-Centered Assessment
- Increasing Awareness and Reducing Harm: A Framework for Equity-Minded and Equity-Centered Assessment
- Equitizing a Grading System Worksheet
- Implementing Equitable Grading in Canvas Checklist
- Mixed Methods Dissertation Study on contract grading

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

What is a Program Learning Outcome (PLO)?

PLOs are short statements that describe the knowledge, skills, values, and habits of mind that students completing a degree or certificate should be able to demonstrate upon completion of that program of study. PLOs can address a range of types of knowledge and skills, including cognitive (knowledge or mental skills), psychomotor (physical/motor and kinesthetic skills and knowledge), affective (feelings and attitudes), and interpersonal/social (interpersonal and social abilities).

Ask yourself the following questions when developing program learning outcomes:

- What should students who successfully complete this program be able to do?
- What skills and competencies will academic programs or workplaces in this field require of graduates?
- Are the outcomes observable, measureable, and can they be performed by students?

PLOs by Academic & Career Pathways (ACP)

Academic and Career Pathways (ACPs) are collections of majors with related courses that fit within a career area. ACPs help guide students toward fulfilling careers through academic programs and integrated experiences and support services.

Cuyamaca College has eight ACPs:

- Behavior & Social Science
- Business & Professional Studies
- Culture, People, & Ideas
- Environmental & Applied Technology
- Health Sciences
- Language & Communication
- STEM
- Visual & Performing Arts

ACPs are encouraged to create shared Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). It's possible for programs to retain program-specific PLOs and share PLOs across

programs. Shared PLOs by ACP should clarify program outcomes for students and ease assessment burdens for faculty. The examples below illustrate how the English department has three shared PLOs with the Language & Communication ACP, as well as two program-specific PLOs just for students earning a degree or certificate in English. Students earning a degree or certificate in English should meet all five PLOs (three shared and two program-specific). The ACP shares the responsibility of assessing the shared PLOs and the English department is responsible to assess the program-specific PLOs.

Examples of Shared ACP Program Learning Outcomes:

Program Outcomes for Language & Communication:
After finishing any program in Language and Communication, students will be able to:

1. Communicate clearly and effectively in a variety of media and/or contexts.
2. Apply discipline-specific theories about language and communication to students' own practice or work.
3. Navigate norms related to communicating in diverse environments, including professional, intercultural, and/or specialized settings.

Examples of Program-Specific Learning Outcomes:

Program Outcomes for English:
After finishing a degree or certificate in English, students will be able to:

1. Develop and support an original argument or interpretation with analysis of relevant evidence.
2. Analyze how authors use language and/or texts to illuminate, critique, and/or shape reality.

Assessment of Program Learning Outcomes

When do we assess PLOs?

The minimum requirement is to assess PLOs at least once within the institution set standard of 4 years. It is recommended that PLOs and SLOs be assessed using the Comprehensive Program Review cycle so that data can inform the program review.

Different Ways to Assess

Mapping: One way to assess PLOs is by mapping SLOs in TracDat. For an example, see the Language and Communication ACP program matrix map. When creating a map for your program, note that not every course-level SLO needs to map to a PLO. It is recommended that departments choose a few courses that every student in the program will take and identify relevant maps between SLOs and PLOs for those courses. Please note that if SLOs are updated, remapping to PLOs may be required.

Direct Assessment: If a program contains a sequence of courses that all students in the program must take, the department may conduct a direct assessment in a capstone course. For example, students earning a degree or certificate in Spanish are required to take and complete up through Spanish IV. Since all students must take Spanish IV in order to complete the program, the Spanish department may choose to offer a direct assessment of PLOs in this course.

Direct assessments can take many forms, including but not limited to: projects, portfolios, presentations, and performances.

How to Submit PLO Assessment Data

If a department's SLOs are mapped to PLOs, that department does not need to submit PLO data. Mapped PLOs are assessed at the same time SLOs are assessed. Therefore, when the department submits SLO data, TracDat automatically generates PLO data.

If a department conducts a direct assessment of PLOs, data from that PLO assessment needs to be submitted on the Program Learning Outcomes Assessment Entry Form. Note that this is only required for direct assessments of PLOs, not for mapped SLOs to PLOs.

Resources for Writing Learning Outcomes

Bloom's Taxonomy

Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
cite	associate	administer	analyze	adapt	appraise
collect	classify	apply	arrange	assemble	argue
copy	convert	calculate	breakdown	collaborate	assess
define	describe	change	categorize	combine	conclude
describe	differentiate	chart	classify	compile	convince
duplicate	discuss	choose	compare	compose	criticize
enumerate	distinguish	collect	connect	concoct	decide
identify	estimate	compute	contrast	construct	deduce
label	explain	construct	correlate	contrive	defend
list	express	demonstrate	detect	create	determine
match	extend	determine	diagram	design	discriminate
memorize	group	develop	differentiate	develop	infer
name	identify	discover	discriminate	devise	interpret
order	indicate	employ	dissect	formulate	judge
quote	order	establish	distinguish	generalize	justify
recall	paraphrase	examine	divide	generate	persuade
recognize	predict	exhibit	examine	hypothesize	prioritize
record	report	illustrate	experiment	imagine	rate
recount	restate	interview	group	incorporate	rank
relate	retell	manipulate	identify	integrate	recommend
repeat	review	modify	illustrate	invent	relate
reproduce	select	operate	inspect	modify	revise
show	summarize	practice	interpret	organize	score
specify	translate	predicts	investigate	originate	support
state	understand	prepare	order	plan	value
tabulate		produce	organize	predict	validate
tell		relate	outline	produce	
when		report	probe	propose	
what		schedule	question	reconstruct	
where		show	relate	reorganize	
who		sketch	select	revise	
		solve	separate	speculate	
		transfer	survey	systematize	
		use	test		

Examples: Using the Best Action Verbs for Learning Outcomes

VERY HARD TO MEASURE	STILL TOO HARD TO MEASURE	RELATIVELY EASY T0 MEASURE
Students will be able to	**Students will be able to**	**Students will be able to**
appreciate *the benefits of exercise.*	***value*** *exercise as a stress reduction tool*	***explain*** *how exercise affects stress.*
access *resources in the college library database.*	***recognize*** *problem solving skills that would enable one to adequately navigate through the proper resources within the college.*	***evaluate*** *the most appropriate resource that is pertinent to their college concern.*
develop *problem-solving skills and conflict resolution.*	***understand*** *how to resolve personal conflicts and assist others in resolving conflicts.*	***demonstrate*** *to classmates how to resolve conflicts by helping them negotiate agreements.*
have more confidence *in their abilities.*	***identify*** *critical thinking skills, such as problem solving as it relates to social issues.*	***demonstrate*** *the ability to analyze and respond to arguments about racial discrimination.*

Curriculum & Learning Outcomes

All Course Outlines of Record (COR) undergo a curriculum review at least once every 5 years. Degree programs are reviewed and modified as needed. As part of the standard review process, faculty update learning outcomes to ensure they reflect the most current and significant outcomes of the course or program.

Curriculum Processes

It is recommended that faculty who are making updates to Course Outlines of Record (COR) contact one of the Outcomes and Assessment Co-coordinators to discuss revisions and updates to outcomes statements before submitting the outlines for curriculum review. This enables consultation on drafts before the SLOs enter the curriculum process, which can save time for faculty.

Here is a description of how course SLOs move through curriculum on Course Outlines of Record (COR):

- When COR are submitted to the Dean of Curriculum and Instructional Operations for inclusion on the General Curriculum agenda, those outlines go through Technical Review first. In Tech Review, a small team of faculty and administration, including the Curriculum Faculty Chair, the Articulation Officer, and an Outcomes and Assessment Co-Coordinator, look closely at the draft of each COR to ensure that the outline meets technical requirements.
- If the Outcomes and Assessment Co-Coordinator has any questions or concerns about the SLOs on the COR, they will reach out via email to the faculty who submitted the outline with questions or suggestions for revision.
- Sometimes, the faculty member who submitted the COR makes adjustments to the outline based on feedback between the Technical Review and the appearance of the COR in the General Curriculum meeting. Other times, the outline moves forward for General Curriculum review without changes.
- SLOs are often discussed in the General Curriculum meeting regarding the scope of the statement, how assessable the statement is, and how the statement connects to the Course Objectives and Course Content on the outline.
- After the COR move through the General Curriculum process as information items, they are approved at the subsequent curriculum meeting for inclusion in the Governing Board packet. That then goes to the Academic Senate for approval, and to the Governing Board meeting for final approval.

Course Outline Updates and SLOs: Best Practices

The following “best practices” address some of the common issues that come up regarding SLOs in the curriculum process:

- The faculty chairs and coordinators who revise outlines aren’t always the faculty who are teaching the courses in question. One best practice is that chairs and coordinators (or whoever is doing the revision of the COR) work closely with the faculty who most often teach the course to determine what is actually happening in the course at the instructional level.
- It is recommended that the faculty who are revising an outline check on the assessment status of the course in question to see if that course is being assessed regularly. If not, there may be a barrier to assessment, such as outdated SLOs, confusing SLOs, too many SLOs, etc. If assessment isn’t happening regularly, sometimes that is an indication that the SLOs may need to be adjusted.
- SLOs should connect logically to the Course Content, Objectives, and Instructional and Assessment methods listed on the COR without duplicating that content.
- SLOs are meant to be changed as course content, objectives, assessments, and instructional practices evolve. Be sure that SLOs reflect the most significant, assessable, take-away skills from the class.
    - In other words, SLO statements answer the question, “what will a student be able to do upon successful completion of this course?”
- While it’s common that programs use patterns of SLO statements across courses, it is a best practice that SLOs reflect the discrete and specific learning outcomes for each course. SLOs should not be duplicated verbatim across separate courses, as those courses necessarily cover different content, objectives, and skills (or skill levels).
- If there are successful, innovative, student-centered, project-based, or real world assessments happening in the course, map the SLOs on to those!

Student and Instructional Services Outcomes and Assessment

Student services departments include Counseling, Veterans Services, Transfer Center, and Disabled Students Programs & Services (DSPS), and many others. Instructional services include the library and tutoring programs. All student and instructional services areas that conduct program reviews should maintain and assess outcomes specific to that department or program. Those outcome statements can take the form of Service Area Outcomes (SAOs) or Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). Outcome statements for Student and Instructional Service areas should connect to or reflect the broader goals of the department from the annual program review (maybe link to goals guidance here if there's a resource from PRSC). The outcomes can reflect the concrete, assessable steps that the department will take to achieve the broader goal. Like all outcomes statements, SAOs and SLOs for Student and Instructional Services should be specific, measurable, reflective of the current priorities of the department. We always recommend that outcome statements be goal-oriented rather than an articulation of the standard, everyday work of the department.

SLO and SAO Reference Guide

This reference sheet is designed to demonstrate the differences between Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and Service Area Outcomes (SAOs), offer samples, and support the creation of revised or new, meaningful outcomes statements.

SLOs: Student Learning Outcomes
Describe what a student will know or be able to do after interacting with your service or course.

SAOs: Service Area Outcomes
Describe what your service area will do in the interest of supporting student success and equity.

Sample Outcomes Statements

Sample Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)	**Sample Service Area Outcomes (SAOs)**
SLO (DSPS): Students can identify three ways to access/apply accommodations to	SAO (DSPS): Increase awareness about the value of DSPS programs and services among students and faculty.

support their academic success.	
SLO (Student Affairs): Students can apply lessons or take-aways from diversity-related programming to their own lives.	SAO (Student Affairs): Actively develop more diverse and robust student leadership through ASG and campus clubs.
SLO (Counseling): Students will evaluate their personal level of responsibility and motivation and make appropriate changes to support their college success.	SAO (Counseling): Facilitate comprehensive education plans for 70% of students within one year of enrollment.

Revising Outcomes

- **Weak SLO (EOPS)**: Students demonstrate knowledge about the benefits and services of EOPS.
    - *Note: This outcome is overly broad: how will students demonstrate knowledge? What will be assessed?.*
- **Revised SLO (EOPS)**: 80% of eligible EOPS-enrolled students will complete and submit a FAFSA on time.
    - *Note: This outcome is more focused, specific, and measurable; it offers a tangible step toward supporting student success.*
- **Weak SAO (Student Health and Wellness)**: Provide students with services to promote physical and emotional wellbeing.
    - *Note: This outcome just lists the most basic function of the service area; it is not assessable, focused, or innovative. We call this a "keeping the lights on" outcome and do not advise that programs adopt outcomes that simply articulate the standard, everyday work of the department or area.*
- **Revised SAO (Student Health and Wellness)**: Create and provide innovative and effective stress-management services that address the specific needs of a diverse student community.
    - *Note: This revised outcome hones in on one aspect of the portfolio of health service offerings, with an implied intention to increase the innovativeness and effectiveness of that service, as well as the diversity of students who are accessing that service, all of which are measurable.*

Creating Meaningful Outcome Statements - Student and Instructional Services

In order to be meaningful, outcomes statements should be updated regularly. Ideally, updates to outcome statements happen every comprehensive program review, though departments can

update their outcomes to coincide with the beginning or completion of major projects, leadership changes, or any other event that influences the goals and priorities of the service area.

Remember, in outcome statements, verbs matter! The action word you use in your outcome statement often dictates the scope and quality of the assessment. For example, an outcome statement that begins with the word “maintain,” suggests that there is no change or improvement required in that area. An outcome statement that includes the verb “increase,” often requires a pre-assessment and a post-assessment in order to determine whether there has been an increase. For SLOs, try to identify verbs that encourage higher-order skills among students, like analysis, synthesis, evaluation, application, and creation. Those skills often align best with the more complex, college-level, and professional work that we want to foster. For SAOs, try to identify verbs that are conducive to the type of assessment that the service area would like to complete.

Meaningful SLOs:

- ❏ Are student-centered
- ❏ Use active verbs (the verb choice determines the assessment)
- ❏ Focus on learning resulting from an activity rather than the activity itself
- ❏ Target higher order, complex skills
- ❏ Are focused and measurable
- ❏ Indicate the most logical means of assessment in the outcomes statement
- ❏ Yield meaningful data for the department or program
- ❏ Reflect the institution’s mission and the values it represents (ILOs can be a good foundation)
- ❏ Align at the divisional and institutional levels

Meaningful SAOs

- ❏ Focus on what the service area does or delivers and its quality
- ❏ May describe the efficiency and/or effectiveness of a service area
- ❏ Use active verbs (the verb choice determines the assessment)
- ❏ Focuses on a specific aspect of service where there is innovation, need for improvement, or need for assessment
- ❏ Yield meaningful data for the department or program
- ❏ Follow the SMART framework: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-Bound

Student and Instructional Services Outcome Statements and Cuyamaca College's Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

One best practice in Outcomes and Assessment for Student and Instructional Service areas is to not only connect outcomes to the most recent/updated goals of the program review, but also connect outcomes statements to the college's Institutional Learning Outcomes. Outcome statements for Student and Instructional Service areas articulate the measurable steps that service areas will take to achieve its own program review goals **and** support the Cuyamaca College's ILOs.

Cuyamaca College's ILOs articulate the broadest outcomes that the college fosters in alignment with its mission, vision, and values. Students develop the broad skills listed in the ILOs through all aspects of their experiences at the college: in their classes, through their use of instructional support programming, and in their interactions with student service areas.

Cuyamaca College's ILOs

Communication - *Students will communicate information, arguments, and opinions effectively to different audiences through various modalities, including listening, speaking, and writing.*

Critical Thinking - *Students will analyze and evaluate qualitative and quantitative information, and synthesize findings to make decisions within various contexts.*

Cultural Competence - *Students will interact effectively with others, taking into account their diverse backgrounds, and work well in cross-cultural situations.*

Professional Responsibility - *Students will practice ethical and civil conduct in professional environments, as well as resolve conflict and build alliances.*

When Student and Instructional Services outcomes are assessed, individual service areas will identify which ILOs each outcome statements support. If the college assesses ILOs through mapping (could provide a link to what this term means?), then the assessment of discreet service area outcomes inform the overall assessment of the ILOs.

Assessing Student and Instructional Services Outcomes (SAOs and SLOs)

We encourage department deans/managers and/or department chairs/coordinators to create an Outcomes Assessment Plan that maps onto your department's comprehensive program review cycle. Student and Instructional Services outcomes need to be assessed once every 4 years (minimum). One option, which this template outlines, is to assess all outcomes within 3 years and then use the year that you're writing the next comprehensive review to reflect on data and make any relevant programmatic changes. Note departments are welcome to assess individual outcome statements as frequently as is needed or desired within a 4-year window, depending on the department's assessment needs.

The Student Services Outcomes Assessment Plan Template can be used as an internal document to help plan your area's assessment cycle and can be submitted with your annual and/or comprehensive program reviews as supporting documentation.

Definition of Terms on Template

- **Assessment Method or Tool**: How you will assess your outcome statement. This can include reports, surveys, documentation of program materials, especially pre- and post-revision, or any other tool that helps you assess the outcome statement.
- **Mapped to ILOs**: This is the Institutional Learning Outcome that the outcome statement best connects to or reflects. You can select more than one.
- **Maped to Program Review Goal**: This is the goal from your most recent or updated program review (annual or comprehensive, as applicable) that the outcome statement best connects to or reflects. You can select more than one. Often, the best outcome statements articulate measurable, assessable steps toward achieving the program review goal(s).
- **Data Collection (Specify Months)**: Identifies what month(s) you will assess the outcome statement each academic year. If you plan to assess the statement more than once per year, please indicate that. If you do not plan to assess the outcome statement in a given academic year, feel free to leave it blank. Note that each outcome statement should be assessed at least once every 4 years, ideally within the comprehensive program review cycle. Feel free to add more columns to indicate more calendar years or adjust the dates if the below template is outdated.
- **Communication Plan**: Our accreditation standards increasingly emphasize the need to not only assess outcome statements, but also incorporate assessment results into meaningful program improvements. Use the last table on the below template to outline your plans for 1) communicating about your outcome statements and assessment results to your department or service area as a whole, and 2) incorporating the assessment

results in a cycle of continuous program improvement. Often, service areas or departments use meetings during Flex/Professional Development week to communicate assessment results and discuss program improvements, but a best practice is to incorporate this kind of reflection more often throughout the academic year.

Student Services Outcomes Assessment Plan Template

Student and Instructional Services outcomes need to be assessed once every 4 years (minimum). We encourage department deans/managers and/or department chairs/coordinators to create an Outcomes Assessment Plan that maps onto your department's comprehensive program review cycle.

One option, which this template outlines, is to assess all outcomes within 3 years and then use the year that you're writing the next comprehensive review to reflect on data and make any relevant programmatic changes. A sample for you to edit is provided below.

Student and Instructional Service Area:
Last Comprehensive Program Review: Spring 2024 **Next Comprehensive Program Review:** Spring 2028

Outcome Statement	**Assessment Method or Tool**	**Mapped to ILO(s) and/or Program Review Goals**	**Data Collection 2024-25 (Specify Months)**	**Data Collection 2025-26 (Specify Months)**	**Data Collection 2026-27 (Specify Months)**	**2027-28 (Comp. Program Review Year)**
Example Statement: Students will create and follow a comprehensive education plan.	Degree audits and internal records	Professional Responsibility PR Goal #2	January and June	January and June	January and June	Data reflection, program modifications
SLO 1: Write outcome statement here.						Data reflection, program modifications
SAO 1: Write outcome statement here.						Data reflection, program modifications
SAO 2: Write outcome statement here.						Data reflection, program modifications

Communication Plan

For each outcome statement: How will your department <u>communicate</u> outcomes assessment results to the larger group and <u>incorporate those results</u> into your service area discussions, processes, and practices.	
SLO 1: Write outcome statement here.	
SLO 2: Write outcome statement here.	
SAO 1: Write outcome statement here.	
SAO 2: Write outcome statement here.	