Module 5: SLOs

Identifying and Assessing Student Learning Outcomes at the Program Level
What is a “Program”?

* Any organizational unit that exists to assist students in achieving specific learning outcomes
Program Examples

- A discipline or cluster of disciplines in program review (e.g., Biological Sciences, ESL, etc.)

- **Group of courses leading to a certificate or degree** (e.g., AA in English, Professional Spanish Skill Certificate)

- Administrative or student service area (e.g., Personnel Office, Financial Aid Office, EOP&S, etc.)
Getting Started

* What roles will program graduates hold and what must they be able to do “out there” in the real world or in the next course or upper division work?

* How will the outcomes be demonstrated “in here?”

* What skills and concepts need to be learned?
When writing program outcomes:

- State the program purpose or mission
- Consider other areas or programs that feed into or interact with your program
- Analyze community expectations for the program
- Survey program descriptors and accomplishments
- Review the components (e.g., core courses) of the program and
- Determine participant expectations
Overlapping Course SLOs Become Program SLOs
Assessment Cycle

1. Articulate goals for student learning

2. Gather evidence about how well students are meeting the goals (and discuss/interpret this evidence)

3. Use this information to improve and to make learning visible
Common Assessment Methods

- **Tests**
  - Locally developed or Standardized

- **Performances**
  - Recital, Presentation, or Demonstration

- **Cumulative**
  - Portfolios, Capstone Projects

- **Surveys**
  - Attitudes and perceptions of students, staff, employers

- **Rubrics**
  - A scoring method for presentations, written papers, etc.

- **Embedded Assessment**
  - Using existing exams, projects, etc. within the class

- **Narrative**
  - Staff and student journals, interviews, focus groups
Embedded Assessments

- Embedded assessments make use of the actual work that students already produce in their courses (tests, papers, presentations, projects, etc.).

- It is not the grades that are important. It is an evaluation of the assignments with the specific outcomes (SLOs) in mind.
Steps in Embedding Exam Questions

* Determine the specific outcome to assess.
* Decide in which courses the outcome will be assessed.
* Conduct an inventory of the exam questions already being used.
* Determine the number of questions needed to adequately assess the SLO.
* Integrate the exam questions into all sections of the course.
* Devise a way to evaluate the results (point total, scoring sheet, rubric, etc)
* Discuss the results with the entire program faculty.
• A rubric is a set of criteria and a scoring scale that is used to assess and evaluate students’ work.

• Rubrics can be used to evaluate embedded essay questions or other examples of student work such as papers, oral presentations, portfolios, etc.

• Excellent way to norm faculty expectations and evaluation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stated Objective or Performance</th>
<th>Beginning 1</th>
<th>Developing 2</th>
<th>Accomplished 3</th>
<th>Exemplary 4</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting a beginning level of performance.</td>
<td>Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting development and movement toward mastery of performance.</td>
<td>Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting mastery of performance.</td>
<td>Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting the highest level of performance.</td>
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Questions to ask for your Assessment Plan

- Who is the target audience of my outcome?
- Who will collect and analyze the data?
- Where will it be done?
- How will data be collected?
- When and how often will it be done?
- Who will reflect on the results? When?
- How will results and implications be documented?
- Will it provide me with evidence that will lead me to make a decision for continuous improvement?
Compare Statements for a Chemistry Program SLO:

* Be able to successfully perform an acid-base titration.

* Given appropriate equipment, a known solid standard acid, a standard base solution of approximate concentration, and a pure solid monoprotic acid, 1) standardize the base solution and 2) determine the molar mass of the solid acid. Minimum performance criterion is an accuracy of 10 ppt; 90% will perform at the 5 ppt level.
Links to Examples of Program SLOs

* [http://www.grossmont.edu/student_learning_outcomes/](http://www.grossmont.edu/student_learning_outcomes/)

* [http://www.valenciacc.edu/instassess/PLOA/outcomes_AS.cfm](http://www.valenciacc.edu/instassess/PLOA/outcomes_AS.cfm)