Student Learning Outcomes & Assessment Strategies

Presented by
Dr. Debraha Watson, Dr. Ella Davis & Johnesa Hodge
Why Develop Learning Outcomes?

Learning outcomes are the foundation and most important element of the course and program because they:

- Identify and define what a student is expected to demonstrate by the end of the course, program or degree.
- Clarify the unit of learning and how the students should achieve the outcome.
- Guide and organize key elements, objectives and competencies for both the instructor and student to expect in the course and program.
Competency-Based Learning

- Competencies are obtained or developed during the process of learning by the student/learner.
- They represent a dynamic combination of knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities.
- Competencies will be formed in various course units and assessed at different stages.
- Time and attention should also be devoted to the development of generic competencies or transferable skills.
WCCCD Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are established at multiple points throughout students educational career.

Course
- Learning outcomes outlined in the syllabus of what a student will learn by the end of the course towards completion of the program.

Program
- Competencies and skills a student will be able to demonstrate in the discipline/industry employment, state boards, apprenticeships, internships and furthering their degree upon completion of the program course requirements.

Institutional
- Core Abilities, competencies, and skills a student will be able to demonstrate such as critical thinking, communication, technological skills, and program outcomes upon the completion of the degree.
Assessment is the college-wide, systematic collection of data and information to determine who, what, when, where and how student learning is happening.

Define/Refine
Student Learning Outcomes/objectives

Develop
Assessment tools/methods for each outcome

Implement
Assessment tools to gather data/info

Analyze
Evaluate collected data

Identify Gaps
Between desired and actual outcomes

Close the Loop
Document and share Results and needed changes in instructional materials, tools, etc.

SLOs
Assessment

Show Me the Learning!!!!!
DEFINE: Student Learning Outcomes

What will the students be able to do at the end of the course or program?

- Focus on what the student should learn
- Start with the end in mind
- Identify the action or behavior with the appropriate verb (Describe, analyze, define, develop, demonstrate, classify, etc.)
- Do not use more than one action verb in the outcome statement
- Describe an outcome, not a process
Are These Good or Not So Good?

- By the end of Research 101, students will be able to develop a complete hypothesis statement.
- Upon completion of the Business Administration program, students will be able to think critically.
- At the end of Composition 200, students will be able to respond critically to a literary text.
Example Learning Outcomes

- **By the end of the Research 101**, students will be able to **develop a complete hypothesis statement** for the **development** of a **research design**.

- **At the end of Composition 200**, students will be able to **respond critically** to a **literary text** in a **capstone research project**.

- **Upon completion of the Business Administration program**, students will be able to **critically evaluate human capital theory** in a **research paper**.
## DEFINE: Learning Outcomes

**What will the student be able to do at the end of the course?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DO’S</th>
<th>DON’TS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ Define outcomes that can be measured</td>
<td>☐ Develop more than 4 learning outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Be concise with student outcome statements with the end in mind</td>
<td>☐ Develop outcomes with more than one action or assessment method.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Include in syllabi, assignment instructions, etc.</td>
<td>☐ Create statements without linking an assessment method.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Develop new outcomes throughout semester.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DEVELOP: Assessment Methods

**DO'S**
- Align assignments and exams with desired outcomes
- Create multiple small assignments throughout the course
- Outline desired outcomes with assignments to build connection with student learning

**DON'TS**
- Rely on only one assignment or assessment method to measure student learning.
- Keep assignments the same from semester to semester.

EXAMPLE: Rubrics, exams, one-minute papers, peer reviews
IMPLEMENT:
Assessment Methods to Gather Products of Learning

**DO'S**
- Align each assessment tool with a learning outcome.
- Target assessments on the important aspects of the course/program.
- Outline desired outcomes with assignments to build connection with student learning.

**DON'TS**
- Don’t rely on outdated evaluation/grading models to tell you how your students are learning.
- Use only one measure to assess learning.

EXAMPLE: Service Learning, Internships, clinicals, portfolios, rubrics, exams, surveys
ANALYZE/IDENTIFY GAPS:
Evaluate Collected Data

**DO’S**

- Evaluate data consistently
- Discuss expectations with faculty/program leadership to identify strengths and areas of concern
- Document, Document, Document

**DON'TS**

- Make changes without data to support

**EXAMPLE:** A specific percentile score on a major exam, percentage of students completing an internship. Another example - Academic Program Annual Report
CLOSE THE LOOP:
Document Results and Improvements

**DO’S**

- Revise curricula, courses, assignments, and instructional tools
- Incorporate results into accreditation and planning efforts
- Improve student engagement and success

**DON’TS**

- “Gloss” over the results
- Neglect to share information with other faculty
- Forget that the investment of faculty to advance assessment is key to accountability and improvement of the institution.

EXAMPLE: Setting institutional priorities and strategic planning and informing institutional decision making
Define: WAC Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to

1. Apply Critical Thinking Skills in Essay Writing
2. Follow a Writing Process when Composing Essays
3. Apply the principles of Introduction, Body, and Conclusion in Essay Writing
4. Demonstrate coherence, support, and unity in an Essay
5. Incorporate different modes of development in Essays and Longer Papers
6. Communicate a clearly stated thesis in Essays and Research Papers

Develop: Assessment Method

The WAC Rubric that measures:
- Assignment Objectives & Purpose
- Organization
- Level of Content
- Development
- Language Usage & Style
- Grammar & Mechanics

Implement: Collect Examples of Learning

In 2017, there were 112 reviews conducted on writing assignments submitted by 9 disciplines.

In 2018, there were 101 reviews conducted on samples of writing assignments submitted by 19 disciplines.

Samples of writing assignments include:
- Critiques, essays, essay exams, reports, research papers, reactionary papers, responses

Analyze: Evaluate Learning & Identify Gaps

The most recent reviews found the following areas for improvement in student writing:
- Clearly stated thesis sentence
- Organization of ideas
- Adequate support (examples, illustrations, facts, statistics, etc.)
- Repetition and wordiness
- Sentence Structure (comma-splices, fragments, run-ons)
- Dangling and misplaced modifiers
- Up-to-date APA and MLA formats
- Correct in-text citations
- Subject-verb agreement
- Faulty Parallelism
- Appropriate word choice
- Active Voice
- Alternative to be verbs
- Coordination and subordination clauses
- Sentence variety

Close the Loop