First Ambassadors' Meeting September 4 & 5

Outcomes:

- 1. Introduce the timeline to complete the process at the department level.
- 2. Brainstorm potential challenges for individual instructors, department chairs, and departments.
- 3. Develop strategies to address potential challenges.
- 4. Outline the suggested process for outcomes assessment for fall 2008-spring 2009.
- 5. Describe the theory of outcomes assessment.

Handouts:

- o Agenda with Outcomes
- o Sample email for department chairs to send to instructors
- o Calendar for fall
- o Blank submission form
- o Example of filled-in forms
- o Draft of Workbook

I hope everyone's semester is going smoothly. As you probably know, Sierra College is working hard this semester to implement a student learning assessment process. Many of us have been assessing our course outcomes informally, but we must now adopt a more formal procedure as the accrediting commission ACCJC placed Sierra College on academic warning last January.

What that means to us in the	Department
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By October 3, 2008, every instructor should:

- a) Pick one outcome from one of your classes to assess;
- b) Identify the assessment technique you will use;
- c) Determine when you will administer the assessment;
- d) Complete the attached one page assessment form and email it to me as an attachment by November 1st.

Please do not include your name or individual course code # on the attached assessment form (list only the Program and the Course Name/Number - for example, BIO4). The data gathered will not be used to evaluate individual instructors. It is the first step in developing a process where we strive to continuously improve and reflect upon the degree to which our students are mastering the student learning outcomes. If you teach a class where there is only one section and are concerned that you might be identified, let me know, and I can remove the assessment results section from your form prior to sending it to the Research Department. Also, this is not intended to be a time consuming process. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need any help. Thank you so much for your commitment to our students at Sierra College.

Regards,

Timeline for Fall 2008

September 4th & 5th → Ambassador Meeting #1 – Introduction & Workbook

Thursday, September 4th

- 10:00 L-193
- 3:30 V-221

Friday, September 5th

- 10:00 C-8
- 11:00 LRC-212
- 1:00 V-207
- October 3rd → Faculty have made the following decisions regarding SLO assessment:
 - o Outcome: Which outcome they will assess
 - o Class: In which class they will assess the outcome
 - o Assessment: What kind of assessment they will use
 - o Administration: When they will administer the assessment
- October 6th October 10th → **Ambassador Meeting #2** Trac Dat Training (Rare Book Room LRC)
 - Monday, October $6^{th} 9:30$ a.m.
 - Tuesday, October 7th 9:30 a.m.
 - Wednesday, October 8th 3:30 p.m.
 - Thursday, October 9th 3:30 p.m.
 - Friday, October 10th 10:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.
- November 1st → Faculty submit data to Department Chairs
- November $5^{th} \rightarrow$ Deadline for Department Chairs to submit data to Research
- November 17 21 → Ambassador Meeting #3 Program Outcomes & Spring Planning (Rare Book Room – LRC)
 - Monday, November 17th 9:30 a.m.
 - Tuesday, November 18th 9:30 a.m.
 - Wednesday, November 19th 3:30 p.m.
 - Thursday, November 20th 3:30 p.m.
 - Friday, November 21st 10:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.

Course Outcome Form



Instruction Office – Student Learning Committee 5000 Rocklin Rd. Rocklin, CA 95677

Program:	Course Name/Number:	
Course Outcome		
Method of Evaluation		
Results		
Related Documents		

Sierra College Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment A Workbook

First Draft September 3, 2008

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Documents of Interest

- "Have You Heard About the Two-Year Rule and Accreditation?"
- Academic Freedom and Responsibility
- 9-Principles from AAHE
- Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee (SLOAC) Plan

Purpose of Guide

As Sierra College moves from the creation to the assessment of outcomes, prodded by the decision of the accrediting agency (ACCJC) to place the college on warning, many on campus have communicated their concerns about the process and purpose of assessment. The first part of this guide seeks to clarify the philosophy and approach of outcomes assessment, as well as to consider what assessment can and cannot offer to individuals and programs.

An accreditation warning is a wake-up call with a limited amount of snooze time. Sierra College is being asked to move quickly toward compliance in all aspects of the recommendations given by the accrediting agency, ACCJC. In order to comply with the two-year rule enforced under accreditation policy, we must design a short but reasonable process. The second part of this guide lays out the short-term timeline and long-term shifts in culture that will allow outcomes assessment to play a meaningful role in planning, especially at the program-level. (See Appendix for information on the "Two-Year Rule")

Finally, this workbook is designed as a practical guide to outcomes assessment by providing examples from your colleagues of assessments and results. While all of us informally seek to assess student learning in our classes and services, many on campus have already moved toward more formal practices. The campus can build its strength and knowledge using this experience of friends and colleagues.

Philosophy and Approach

We are being tasked to take on a new level of accountability in our teaching and our students' learning. As an outside mandate, the requirement of more accountability implies that we are falling short. However, accountability as claimed by educators proudly takes responsibility for providing the environment and tools students need. As an institution, Sierra College has taken the necessary responsibility, and with a few changes in the administrative process we already use, we can show how student learning is taking place and use the information gained from assessment to improve it. There is no getting around the punitive nature of outcomes assessment as it is being introduced at Sierra College. However, it is also important to remember that we can still claim and create a faculty-led and controlled process. (See Appendix for Article on Academic Freedom & Responsibility)

Assessing student learning is already an important part of teaching at Sierra College. Instructors formally and informally gauge the success of individuals in their classes and regularly consider how the class as a whole has learned concepts large and small. Our change is toward keeping better track of what we assess and how. We are all being asked to consciously consider the relationship between the outcomes of the course we teach, the assessments we use to gauge student learning of these outcomes, and the results of these assessments as instructors or providers of services. Using this information, individuals and programs can identify strengths and weaknesses and consider what actions they will take to improve student learning. Assessment will provide a strategy which enables us to ask how we are doing in new ways. Student learning assessment is designed to consider not how individual students perform on learning outcomes but how classes, courses, programs, or even the institution is identifying and gathering the results of student learning outcomes. Documenting and seeking to improve student learning through assessment can provide valuable information to individuals and programs.

There is a model that generally describes the process of assessment as a wheel or circle. The assessment process is designed to answer questions about student learning and enable us to reflect on what we've learned as well as consider what, if any, changes would be beneficial. The following steps **a** through **d** are an example of this model:

a). Identifying student learning outcomes allows us to ask ourselves, "What are we trying to do?" b). Developing assessments to gauge student

learning requires that we consider, "How will we know if we are successful?" c). Gathering the results of assessments allows us to ask, "How successful were we?" and d). As we finally interpret these results it is time to consider, "What should we do about it?" As individuals who share a culture of inquiry, we can approach these questions with the same spirit of learning that we hope to inspire in our students.

Just as we do not expect our students to be experts at new fields of study, as individuals and as an institution it will take time to learn how to frame projects that answer our questions. Identifying outcomes that reflect what we are trying to do is a challenging process in itself, and some early projects developed by individuals and programs may prove to be of limited use. It may take time to develop assessments that yield meaningful results. Decisions about what changes we want to make based upon results may not be easy or obvious. We can start with the assessments we already use in classrooms and services across campus. Over time we will build our knowledge and strengthen the usefulness of outcomes assessment.

As we move through the cycle of assessment, it is also important to recognize that this process cannot (and should not) be expected to provide some magical change in teaching and learning at Sierra College. Assessment cannot (and should not) replace regular communication about broad goals, theoretical perspectives, and other intangibles that are a part of the educational process. Information from assessment cannot (and should not) replace other indicators that allow individual departments and programs, as well as the institution as a whole, to gauge their strength. Indicators such as program goals, success and retention, ARCC data, full-time/part-time ratios, productivity, and other measures used to consider program needs remain viable and important measures.

Timeline

Sierra College already has a tradition of outcomes assessment.

The Learner Outcome Institute began in _____ and the Program Outcomes Institute began in _____. In the projects developed in these institutes, outcomes assessment was piloted in classrooms and programs throughout the college. Since their beginning, together these institutes trained _____ individuals in _____ programs. A Student Learning Committee has supported the institutionalization of this process since its creation as a subcommittee of Academic Senate in _____.

In response to the accreditation warning letter in January 2008, the college needs to speed up and expand this process to develop a plan to assess all courses and programs. In the spring of 2008, the SLO Committee created a "Plan for the Implementation and Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes at Sierra College." As a result of this plan, the Office of Instruction provided releases for a full-time Student Learning Outcomes Coordinator and six part-time "Ambassadors" to assist the college in the creation and implementation of this plan. In the late spring semester and over the summer these positions were staffed. Faculty was asked to include outcomes in their syllabi and identify one outcome in one class to assess in the fall semester. Just before the beginning of fall semester 2008, sixty-four faculty and staff gathered for a "Forum on Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment." This conversation continues as a crucial part of the process of assessing course, program, and institutional outcomes at Sierra College.

Looking forward, current plans propose a three-semester introduction to outcomes assessment at the course, program, and institution level. In spring 2010 this introduction will shift into a cycle of assessment designed to add to current indicators already used to support program and institutional planning and resource allocation.

Fall semester 2008 introduces the process at the class level. Each instructor has been asked to identify and assess one outcome in one course and report the results through their department chair. Rather than using a top-down method, this approach is designed to start at the class level for two-reasons. First, course outcomes, developed through a well-established curriculum process, represent our strongest start for identifying goals for student learning. Second, individuals will be able to consider how their current assessment practices can be used to gather results of student learning. At the same time, departments/programs will begin to develop outcomes and the Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee

(SLOAC) will develop a draft of institutional outcomes. A recently purchased program (TracDat) will allow the storage and reporting of assessment information at the course and program level. The variety of assessment strategies and results are designed to begin a conversation. For this information to be meaningful in the long-run, outcomes assessment will need to be focused.

Spring semester 2009 refines the process at the department/program level. Department meetings will include a conversation on the assessments utilized and results generated during the fall semester. Departments will also consider how to focus the information they gather. Based upon highenrollment courses (where more information can be sampled) or other criteria, programs/departments will be encouraged to limit course-based outcomes questions. Instead, course assessments will primarily be used to gather information on program outcomes. Individual assessment projects can continue, but the focus will move to questions that will increase the evidence available for program review. At the same time, a pilot project for institutional assessment will be launched. Fall 2008-Spring 2009 will challenge departments to conduct two assessments. In the future, the assessment process will be yearly.

Fall semester 2009 continues the cycle of strengthening the questions we ask and our understanding of the answers we generate as a result of the assessment process. Department meetings will now have two sets of assessment results to explore as they identify their assessment project for the upcoming year. Through conversations within and between programs, a cycle will be established designed to accomplish two things. First, create and assess learning outcomes on a yearly basis. The results of these assessments will help inform the yearly PAR (Program Assessment and Review) document generated each spring by each department. Second, initiate an indepth review of assessments on a regular (four to six year) basis (PAR-Plus).

Spring semester 2010 pilots the first set of PAR-Plus reviews.

Examples:

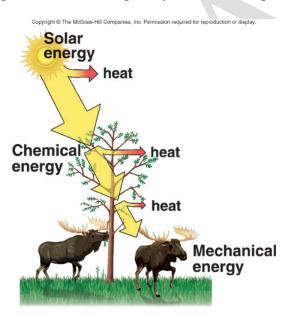
BIOLOGY OUTCOMES:

- 1. Name and describe the structures of the respiratory system by tracing the path of air from the external nares to the alveoli.
- 2. Explain the mechanism of pulmonary ventilation by describing the structures and events involved in inspiration and expiration.

ASSESSMENT:

Complete the following questions and submit your answers through the "view/complete assignment" link in Blackboard.

1. Read "Energy in Biological Systems" starting on pg. 90 – 93 in your textbook and review Energy Concepts PowerPoint slides #1-10. Describe in your own words in a short paragraph what is happening in the diagram below. Include the specific types of energy and how the First and Second Law of Thermodynamics apply. (Act like I don't know anything about this drawing and you are teaching me about the flow of energy ☺)



- 2. **Explain** how the molecule ATP is used as a source of energy for cellular processes. You can draw and describe a diagram OR use words to get your point across.
- 3. Write the **overall equation for cellular respiration** below.
- 4. I would like you to get a basic idea of what is happening during the three phases of cellular respiration. Use your cell metabolism PowerPoint slides and chapter 4 pgs. 103 110 to answer the following questions:

- a. Where in the cell does **glycolysis** occur? In general, what is required for glycolysis and what are the final overall products of glycolysis? (Basically what enters into glycolysis and what do you end up with when the process is completed.)
- b. What is required for cells to enter the **Kreb's cycle** (a.k.a. Citric Acid cycle)? Where in the cell does it occur? What is produced during this phase?
- c. Where in the cell does the **electron transport chain** occur? What are the ultimate products of this phase?

Sociology

Learner Outcomes and Assessments:

- 1. Describe, discuss and evaluate connections between public issues and private troubles. Quiz, exam, identification and evaluation of film examples (film, *Roger and Me*), blackboard discussion board
- 2. Research and evaluate social problems. Research paper in conjunction with Social Justice Day activities
- 3. Examine and evaluate social problems from the perspective of the key sociological theories. Exam, in-class activities, research paper, check in, minute paper
- 4. Discuss and analyze social problems with social institutions and conditions including but not limited to family structures, employment status, corporate and government institutions, gender identities, wealth and poverty, race and ethnicity, and the distribution of life chances. Quiz, exam, research project, evaluation of participation with Social Justice Day, in-class group work, minute paper, blackboard discussion board
- 5. Examine the mal-distribution of global power. Exam, survey, TTYPA, muddy/clear, minute paper, blackboard discussion board
- 6. Discuss, analyze and evaluate causes and solutions to these social problems. Exam, evaluation of participation with Social Justice Day, check in, blackboard discussion board
- 7. Examine, discuss and debate issues of social justice and the effectiveness of social movements. Research paper, blackboard discussion board, evaluation of participation with Social Justice Day, TTYPA

Course Outcome Form



Instruction Office – Student Learning Committee

5000 Rocklin Rd. Rocklin, CA 9567

Program:	ESL	Course Name/Number: _	ESL 520G

Identify parts of speech: noun, verb, noun modifier, adverb, conjunction/connector, article, preposition

Method of Evaluation

A section on the final exam from Spring 2008.

Students needed to find the adjectives, adverbs, and noun modifiers of other nouns. Then they needed to identify which word in the sentence was being modified. This involved recognizing certain parts of speech that modified others (adjectives, adverbs, and nouns that modify other nouns) as well as the nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs that were being modified.

Results

- 44% of students earned 90% or higher on this section of the exam.
- 50% of students earned 80% or higher on this section of the exam.
- 67% of students earned 70% or higher on this section of the exam.
- 83% of students earned 60% or higher on this section of the exam.
- 17% of students earned 50% or lower on this section of the exam.

*Note: This section assessed various parts of speech listed in the course outcome above; however, it did not asse students' ability to identify conjunction/connectors, articles, or prepositions.

Related Documents

Finding the adjectives, adverbs, and nouns that describe other nouns: Underline the adjectives and circle the adverbs in each line. Draw two lines under the nouns that describe other nouns. Then draw an arrow (\rightarrow) to the word they describe or tell more about. **Hint: There are 3 nouns modifying other nouns and 14 total adjectives/adverbs in the passage. (51 points)

The strawberry festival is a particularly important event in our town. The activities start early in the day. You can hear the pleasant sound of the joyful, young children playing happily in the streets while they sing and play games in the city park. During the festival, the air smells sweet from pies and cakes, and you can taste the delicious desserts made with fresh strawberries that were grown on nearby farms. You can watch a parade in which people from the community wear costumes and ride down the streets in police cars that were colorfully decorated by children. Everybody works hard to make this a special event.

Course Outcome Form



Instruction Office – Student Learning Committee

5000 Rocklin Rd. Rocklin, CA 9567

Some verbiage here on how to complete and where to submit????

Program: Accounting Course Name/Number: Business 1
Course Outcome
Through written activities the student will analyze and journalize transactions.
Method of Evaluation
-Computerized practice set (Work4Me) -Rubric used to evaluate student/class performance (100 points possible)
Results

Every student processed 25 journal entries on the computer. One point was given for each of the following: account, debit, credit and business transactions amount. The following criteria was used to evaluate student/class performance: Results

Advanced: 90-100 pts. 73%

Proficient: 80-89 pts. 17% 70-79 pts. 5% Basic: Below Basic: 60-69 pts. 3% Failing: 59 or less 2%

Ninety percent scored at an advanced or proficient level. Five percent of the students are still struggling with this skill and score below or far below basic.

Related Documents

Documents of Interest

- Two-Year Rule Article from Academic Senate
- Academic Freedom and Responsibility
- 9-Principles from AAHE
- Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Committee (SLOAC) Plan

AAHE 9 Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning

- 1. The assessment of student learning begins with educational values. Assessment is not an end in itself but a vehicle for educational improvement. Its effective practice, then, begins with and enacts a vision of the kinds of learning we most value for students and strive to help them achieve. Educational values should drive not only *what* we choose to assess but also *how* we do so. Where questions about educational mission and values are skipped over, assessment threatens to be an exercise in measuring what's easy, rather than a process of improving what we really care about.
- 2. Assessment is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated, and revealed in performance over time. Learning is a complex process. It entails not only what students know but what they can do with what they know; it involves not only knowledge and abilities but values, attitudes, and habits of mind that affect both academic success and performance beyond the classroom. Assessment should reflect these understandings by employing a diverse array of methods, including those that call for actual performance, using them over time so as to reveal change, growth, and increasing degrees of integration. Such an approach aims for a more complete and accurate picture of learning, and therefore firmer bases for improving our students' educational experience.
- 3. Assessment works best when the programs it seeks to improve have clear, explicitly stated purposes. Assessment is a goal-oriented process. It entails comparing educational performance with educational purposes and expectations -- those derived from the institution's mission, from faculty intentions in program and course design, and from knowledge of students' own goals. Where program purposes lack specificity or agreement, assessment as a process pushes a campus toward clarity about where to aim and what standards to apply; assessment also prompts attention to where and how program goals will be taught and learned. Clear, shared, implementable goals are the cornerstone for assessment that is focused and useful.
- 4. Assessment requires attention to outcomes but also and equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes. Information about outcomes is of high importance; where students "end up" matters greatly. But to improve outcomes, we need to know about student experience along the way -- about the curricula, teaching, and kind of student effort that lead to particular outcomes. Assessment can help us understand which students learn best under what conditions; with such knowledge comes the capacity to improve the whole of their learning.
- 5. Assessment works best when it is ongoing not episodic. Assessment is a process whose power is cumulative. Though isolated, "one-shot" assessment can be better than none, improvement is best fostered when assessment entails a linked series of activities undertaken over time. This may mean tracking the process of individual students, or of cohorts of students; it may mean collecting the same

examples of student performance or using the same instrument semester after semester. The point is to monitor progress toward intended goals in a spirit of continuous improvement. Along the way, the assessment process itself should be evaluated and refined in light of emerging insights.

- 6. Assessment fosters wider improvement when representatives from across the educational community are involved. Student learning is a campus-wide responsibility, and assessment is a way of enacting that responsibility. Thus, while assessment efforts may start small, the aim over time is to involve people from across the educational community. Faculty play an especially important role, but assessment's questions can't be fully addressed without participation by student-affairs educators, librarians, administrators, and students. Assessment may also involve individuals from beyond the campus (alumni/ae, trustees, employers) whose experience can enrich the sense of appropriate aims and standards for learning. Thus understood, assessment is not a task for small groups of experts but a collaborative activity; its aim is wider, better-informed attention to student learning by all parties with a stake in its improvement.
- 7. Assessment makes a difference when it begins with issues of use and illuminates questions that people really care about. Assessment recognizes the value of information in the process of improvement. But to be useful, information must be connected to issues or questions that people really care about. This implies assessment approaches that produce evidence that relevant parties will find credible, suggestive, and applicable to decisions that need to be made. It means thinking in advance about how the information will be used, and by whom. The point of assessment is not to gather data and return "results"; it is a process that starts with the questions of decision-makers, that involves them in the gathering and interpreting of data, and that informs and helps guide continous improvement.
- 8. Assessment is most likely to lead to improvement when it is part of a larger set of conditions that promote change. Assessment alone changes little. Its greatest contribution comes on campuses where the quality of teaching and learning is visibly valued and worked at. On such campuses, the push to improve educational performance is a visible and primary goal of leadership; improving the quality of undergraduate education is central to the institution's planning, budgeting, and personnel decisions. On such campuses, information about learning outcomes is seen as an integral part of decision making, and avidly sought.
- 9. Through assessment, educators meet responsibilities to students and to the public. There is a compelling public stake in education. As educators, we have a responsibility to the publics that support or depend on us to provide information about the ways in which our students meet goals and expectations. But that responsibility goes beyond the reporting of such information; our deeper obligation to ourselves, our students, and society -- is to improve. Those to whom educators are accountable have a corresponding obligation to support such attempts at improvement.

Revision 4/8

Implementation and Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes at Sierra College.

I STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE (SLOAC)

A. CONFIGURATION

1. Faculty - 10 -12

One to two faculty from each representative group

This group will include members who will also comprise a
team of student learning outcomes assessment facilitators
who will work with departments and divisions to develop
and implement student learning outcomes.

Committee Chair and/or vice chairs (Committee chair will be the Student Leaning Outcomes and Assessment Coordinator)

- 2. Student Services 1 representative from Non-Instructional Programs
- 3. Administrative support 1
- 4. Deans 4
 One dean from each division
- 5. Researcher 1
- 6. Vice Presidents

Vice President of Instruction Vice President of Student Services

B. COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1. Review applications for committee chair and/or chair and vicechairs and make recommendations to VPI
- 2. Review applications for instructional release time and make recommendations to the Vice President of Instruction

- 3. Provide linkage, criteria, and rational for budgetary decision in support of program assessment
- 4. Collect and report assessment data
- 5. Assist faculty and departments with course and program review
- 6. Implement and oversee a process for ongoing course, program, and institutional outcomes assessment review

C. OTHER COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. This committee and the existing PAR committee should be combined, and the PAR should reflect student learning outcomes assessment.
 - 2. Committee should continue to be a standing committee under the Academic Senate.
- 3. A mission statement needs to be developed for this committee.
 - 4. The administrative support member and the Vice President of Instruction and the Vice President of Student Services will be non-voting members.

II STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT CHAIR AND/OR VICE-CHAIR(S)

A. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1. Chair Program Outcome Review Committee
- 2. Coordinate the training of faculty and staff in assessing student learning outcomes
- 3. Develop a plan to implement course, program, and institutional learning outcomes and their assessments to comply with the ACCJC requirements for accreditation
- 4. Work with faculty to promote, develop, and implement SLO assessment

- 5. Provide direction and assistance to a team of faculty charged with facilitating students learning outcomes assessment at the department and division level.
- 6.. Prepare annual reports, ACCJC accreditation reports, and other reports as needed
- 7. Make presentations promoting students learning outcomes assessment to the campus community.
- 8. Represent student learning outcomes assessment by attending department meetings and attending meetings of the Curriculum Committee, Academic Senate, Education Requirements, Academic Standards, CTE, New Faculty Academy, etc. as necessary.
- 9. Facilitate the development and assessment of institutional level outcomes
- 10. Create and maintain a Student Learning Outcomes Assessment handbook

III REASSIGNED TIME

- 1. 100% release for the coordinator for the first year. Release will be evaluated at that time.
- 2. The equivalent of 100% release for a team of faculty and/or faculty and classified student learning outcome facilitators who will work under the direction of the SLOAC chair to facilitate the development and implementation of student learning outcomes campus-wide