Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)

Why SLO?
- Provide the basis for program improvement
- Communicate instructional intent
- Increase awareness of learning for students
- Provide a common language for program participants
- Provide a basis for advising
- Can be shared in promotional materials
- Support accreditation and evaluation

Definition of a SLO

A statement that:
- describes specific behaviors that a student of the program should demonstrate after completing the program;
- focuses on the intended abilities, knowledge, values, and attitudes of the student after completion of the program.

3 Questions to consider when writing these statements:
- What does the student know? [Cognitive]
- What can the student do? [Psychomotor]
- What does the student care about? [Affective]

Writing Student Learning Outcomes
- Frame the learning outcome in terms of the program rather than individual courses or individual students (What will program graduates be able to do?).
- Use concrete action verbs (e.g., define, classify, operate, formulate) instead of passive verbs (e.g., be exposed to) or vague verbs (understand, know).
- Do not join elements in one statement that can not be assessed by a single method (e.g., Graduates will demonstrate knowledge of math fundamentals and gain competency in oral presentations--POOR).
- Focus on learning results and not on the learning process:
    - ~~Computer applications will be introduced in all core courses.~~ NO
    - Graduates will demonstrate proficiency in computer applications. YES
- State so that the outcome can be measured by more than one assessment method.
    - "…will demonstrate competence in applying math principles"
    - NOT "…will score over 95% on the final exam of MA412."
- Indicate the level and type of competence that is required of graduates of a program.

Checklist for Evaluating Student Learning Outcomes
- Aligned to mission and goal statements
- Clearly describe and define expected abilities, knowledge, values, and attitudes of the graduates of the program
- Simply stated
- Distinctive and specific to the program
- Stated so that more than a single method can be used to measure the outcome
- Focused on the learning results and not the learning process
- Measurable
- Can be used to identify areas to improve
- Can be supported with department resources (human, physical, and financial)

Organizing Student Learning Outcomes

Curriculum Map: A curriculum map can be used to show when each student learning outcome will be addressed in the program.

Key:
- I = introduced
- E = emphasized
- R = reinforced
- A = assessed

Example: A sample curriculum map for a program in Business Administration follows (core program goals and outcomes mapped)

Core Program Goals. Program graduates will possess:
1. Writing competencies
2. Critical thinking competencies
3. Quantitative reasoning competencies
4. Oral communications competencies
5. Computer Literacy
6. Values awareness

Content Specific Goals. Program graduates will possess:
1. Global Business competencies
2. Accounting competencies
3. Finance Competencies

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES	BA116	BA126	BA136	BA146	BA156	BA166	BA176
Writing Competencies							
Identify a subject and formulate a thesis statement			I		E		RA
Organize ideas to support a position			I		E		EA
Use appropriate sentence structure and vocabulary	I		E	R	EA		A
Document references and citations according to an accepted style manual			I		ER		ERA
Critical thinking competencies							
Identify business problems and apply creative solutions		I		R	E	E	A
Analyze complex problems by identifying and evaluating the components of the problem		I		R	E	EA	
Quantitative Reasoning Competencies							
Apply quantitative methods to solving real-world problems	I	E	R	RA			
Perform necessary arithmetic computations to solve quantitative problems	I	E	R	RA			
Recognize the reasonableness of numeric answers	I	E	ER	RA			
Oral Communication Competencies							
Organize an argument in logical sequence that is understood by the audience		I	E	RA		RA	
Use visual aids effectively to support an oral		I	E	RA		RA	

presentation							
Demonstrate professional demeanor in a presentation		I	E	RA		RA	
Speak clearly in a well-modulated tone		I	E	RA		RA	
Engage the audience		I	E	RA		RA	
Computer Literacy							
Demonstrate familiarity with information resources and technologies	I	E	RA				
Evaluate sources of information	I	E	RA			RA	
Demonstrate computer literacy in preparation of reports and presentations	I		E	E	E	R	A
Demonstrate ability to use software applications to solve business problems		I			E	EA	
Conduct search queries through the use of the internet	I	E	E	RA			
Values Awareness							
Recognize ethical issues	I		E	R	R	RA	RA
Identify ethical issues	I	E	R	R	R	RA	RA
Translate ethical concepts into responsible behavior in a business environment	I			E	R	RA	RA
Develop values awareness	I		E	R	R	RA	RA
Student learning outcomes developed by New Jersey City University							

Assessing Student Achievement of Student Learning Outcomes

Assessment Matrix: An assessment matrix can be useful to link student learning outcomes with assessment methods. An example follows.

Key:
- D = Direct: measured
- I = Indirect: perceived

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES	*Graduating Senior Survey*	*Capstone Course*	*Portfolio*	*Research Paper*	*Practicum Supervisor Evaluation*	*Exit Exam*	*Exit Interview*
Writing Competencies							
Identify a subject and formulate a thesis statement		D	D	D			
Organize ideas to support a position	I	D	D	D			
Use appropriate sentence structure and vocabulary		D	D	D			
Document references and citations according to an accepted style manual		D	D	D			
Critical thinking competencies							
Identify business problems and	I				D	D	I

apply creative solutions							
Analyze complex problems by identifying and evaluating the components of the problem	I				D	D	I

PROGRAM PROCESSES	Graduating Senior Survey	Capstone Course	Portfolio	Research Paper	Practicum Supervisor Evaluation	Exit Exam	Exit Interview
Student Satisfaction							
Satisfaction with advising	D						D
Satisfaction with availability of faculty and staff	D						D
Satisfaction with quality of instruction	D						D