What are Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)?

Statements:
- That specify what learners will know, be able to do or be able to demonstrate when they complete or participate in a program/activity/course/project.

Outcomes:
- Are expressed as knowledge, skills, attitudes or values.

Outcomes focus on the end result of your program
- How do you know the students have learned what you want them to learn?
- What does it look like?
- How will you identify it?

Student Learning Outcomes relate to the mission of UAH, the mission and goals of your college and/or your department or program. SLOs define what the graduate should know and be able to do at the end of your program. Avoid compound outcomes and/or also called double barreling.
Use simple, specific action verbs to describe what the students are expected to demonstrate upon completion of your program.
- Action verbs result in overt behavior that can be observed and measured.
  - Analyze, apply, compare, create, estimate, demonstrate, illustrate
    (see Learning Taxonomies, p. 10)
- Avoid verbs that are unclear and call for behavior that cannot be observed or measured.
  - Appreciate, understand, learn, know, become familiar with

SLO Tips
Begin your outcomes with a statement like the following:
- “By the end of this program, successful students will be able to …”

Begin each outcome with an action verb that is specific to the desired level of learning.
- The action verb is followed by the subject of learning and context to which the learning will occur.

Assessment Techniques
Direct Measures
- Standardized tests
- Performance on licensure or professional exams
- Essays
- Exhibits
- Performances
- Course assignments
- Portfolios of work samples
- Authentic assessments
- Job placement rates
Academic Assessment
(About-Tips-Techniques-Guidelines-Examples)

Indirect Measures
- Student surveys
- Graduate follow-ups
- Focus groups
- Exit interviews

Common Pitfalls for Assessing Student Learning
- Using grades, final exam scores or student GPAs as a criteria for success.
  - These indicators do not provide sufficient information to guide program improvement.

SLO Guidelines
Identify 3-5 (at least 3) student learning outcomes for your program to serve as benchmark assessments for completion of your program
- Write outcomes that are Measurable, Manageable, Meaningful
- Identify 2 appropriate assessment method strategies for each learning outcome (at least one direct)
- Develop a scoring guide/rubric
- Identify the target criteria for success
- Identify the course/s where assessment will occur

Program Assessment answers these questions:
- What should an UAH graduate in -------- know and be able to do at the end of the program that they could not do before?
- Do they know it?
- How do I know?
- How does this information help improve the quality of this program at UAH?

SLO Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>By the end of this program, successful students will:</th>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Learning Outcome Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1: (Bad Outcome Example)</td>
<td>Be given opportunities to learn effective communication skills</td>
<td>This outcome only describes the programmatic content and not the attributes of successful students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 2: (Vague Outcome Example)</td>
<td>Have a deeper appreciate for good communication practices</td>
<td>Does not start with action verb or define level of learning; no context and not specific</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outcome 3: (Less vague)</td>
<td>Understand principles of effective communication</td>
<td>Begins with an action verb, no level of learning is defined, subject of learning is too vague to assess</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outcome 4: (Specific)</td>
<td>Communicate effectively in a professional environment through technical reports and presentations</td>
<td>Begins with an action verb, defines level of learning, provides context to ensure outcome is specific and measurable</td>
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