Institutional Assessment: Student Learning Outcomes

Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA)

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE

Key Questions

What is a Student Learning Outcome?
Who uses Student Learning Outcomes?
What makes a good Student Learning Outcome?

UAH Mission

The University of Alabama in Huntsville is a research-intensive, internationally recognized technological university serving Alabama and beyond.

Our mission is to explore, discover, create, and communicate knowledge, while educating individuals in leadership, innovation, critical thinking, and civic responsibility and inspiring a passion for learning.
Student Learning
Required for degree, major, certificates
Optional for everyone else

Student Learning Outcome (SLO) Components
1. Outcome: observable knowledge, skill, attitude or behavior for a student group
2. Assessment Method: two ways to measure
3. Assessment Target: expected results
4. Data Collected: actual results
5. Use of Results: changes made

Outcome Statement: Example #1
Undergraduate majors can identify the key theories in this field.

Knowledge, Skill, Attitude/Behavior
Outcome Statement: Example #2

Graduates of this program will learn how to complete original research.

Student Population
Knowledge, Skill, Attitude/Behavior

Observable

Outcome Statement: Example #2

Graduates of this program will be able to design and implement an original experiment or research project successfully.

Student Population
Knowledge, Skill, Attitude/Behavior

Observable

Outcome Statement: Example #3

Program graduates have effective communication skills.

Student Population
Knowledge, Skill, Attitude/Behavior

Observable
Outcome Statement: Example #3

**Program graduates demonstrate effective written communication skills.**

**Knowledge, Skill, Attitude/Behavior**

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Bloom's Taxonomy

Illustration from [https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/](https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/)

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Outcome Statement: Example #3

**Program graduates construct, organize, and articulate in writing an argument in support of a theory or idea.**

**Knowledge, Skill, Attitude/Behavior**

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Institutional Assessment: Different Methods
Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA)

Assessment Methods

Direct
• Concrete, observable evidence of learning typically through work product or performance
  - Essays/papers
  - Presentations
  - Portfolios
  - Test questions
  - Standardized exams
  - Labs
  - Performances

Indirect
• Students’ reflection on or perception of their own learning
• Appearance of learning but no clear evidence
  - Surveys
  - Interviews
  - Focus groups
  - Placement rates
  - Retention rates
  - Time to degree
Assessment Methods

Direct
• Concrete, observable evidence of learning typically through work product or performance

Indirect
• Students’ reflection on or perception of their own learning
• Appearance of learning but no clear evidence

Who is involved in assessing and collecting it?
What information is collected?
When is it collected?
How is it reported?

Assessment Method: Example #1
Outcome: Undergraduate majors can identify the key theories in this field.
Assessment Method #1: The comprehensive final exam for ABS-301 includes one section where students identify the appropriate theory for a series of statements. This exam is graded by the course faculty member and the percent correct for this section for each student is reported.
Assessment Method #2: The final research projects completed during the capstone courses are evaluated separately by the course instructor and one other departmental faculty member using a rubric. Two rubric ratings for each student, one from each rater, for the criteria "Description of Applicable Theories" are collected and reported as the percentage of students scoring at each level.

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Assessment Target #1: At least 80% of students will get 100% of the questions correct.

Assessment Target #2: At least 90% of students will receive ratings of Good (3) or Excellent (4)
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More Questions?
Visit the OIRA website. (Search OIRA from the UAH Website. Click on Assessment then Resources.)
Contact Ginny Cockerill at gdc0004@uah.edu or x. 6254.