

Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment

REFERENCE GUIDE



University
of Victoria
Student Affairs

Together, we transform students' lives.

Together, we transform students' lives.

Since 2009, the Division of Student Affairs has worked together and in partnership with our colleagues across the University to help create and strengthen a healthy, safe and inspirational learning environment in which students are actively supported in their academic pursuits and in meeting their personal and educational goals.

Learning occurs always and everywhere in students' lives; we offer a variety of engagement opportunities for student learning outside of the classroom in alignment with the University's overall intended student learning goals. While we believe that the programs and services offered by Student Affairs are valued by our students, faculty and staff, we are just beginning to develop clear and consistent methods for demonstrating and articulating how Student Affairs supports student development, learning, growth and success. Our efforts to develop a common language of learning outcomes and adopt professional standards for programs and services that educate and engage our students will help us enrich every UVic student's experience and ultimately transform their lives.

Our ability to work collaboratively across the institution, within a framework of clearly articulated learning outcomes and sound assessment practices will define our success and that of our students. It is our goal that this guide will provide you with the foundational resources and information you need to help achieve this collective vision.

We will actively engage with many of the materials in this Guide during various professional development opportunities scheduled to take place during the third phase of work with Keeling & Associates in 2015/2016. These activities will support Student Affairs' continuing process of maturation - a process that dates back to our current organization's origin in 2009 and includes our current strong forward-focus on professional standards and learning outcomes.

I take enormous pride in the commitment, dedication and energy of our talented Student Affairs' staff. I look forward to continuing this journey with you.



Jim Dunsdon
Associate Vice-President, Student Affairs

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SECTION ONE



BACKGROUND



VISION

Together, we transform students' lives.

VALUES

Collaboration

We recognize and commit to working together to create a seamless and outstanding student experience.

Community

We will build strong relationships to foster institutional belonging, ownership and pride in our team.

Accountability

We accept responsibility for the outcomes of our actions and decisions and those of our team.

Respectful Interaction and Communication

We will interact professionally and communicate with respect, honesty and openness.

Diversity

We acknowledge and support differences while modelling inclusivity.

November 6, 2014

**University of Victoria – Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education
Learning and Development Outcomes**

UVic Learning Outcomes ¹

Intellectual, academic and practical skills in:

- I. Inquiry, analysis, and problem solving
- II. Critical, innovative, and creative thinking
- III. Effective written, visual, and oral communication
- IV. Numerical literacy
- V. Critical evaluation of qualitative and quantitative information
- VI. Critical management of information, including in digital environments
- VII. Collaboration and the ability to work in teams

Personal and social responsibility capacities:

- VIII. Informed civic engagement and understanding – from local to global
- IX. Intercultural knowledge and sensitivity
- X. Ethical and professional reasoning and action
- XI. Life-long learning

CAS Student Outcome Domain	Dimension of Outcome Domains
1. Knowledge acquisition, construction, integration and application <i>UVic Outcomes I, III, IV, V</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Understanding knowledge from a range of disciplines b. Connecting knowledge to other knowledge, ideas and experiences c. Constructing knowledge d. Relating knowledge to daily life
2. Cognitive Complexity <i>UVic Outcomes II, V, VI, X</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Critical thinking b. Reflective thinking c. Effective reasoning d. Creativity
3. Intrapersonal Development <i>UVic Outcomes X, XI</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Realistic self-appraisal, self-understanding, and self-respect b. Identity development c. Commitment to ethics and integrity d. Spiritual awareness
4. Interpersonal Competence <i>UVic Outcomes VII, VIII, IX</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Meaningful relationships b. Interdependence c. Collaboration d. Effective leadership
5. Humanitarianism and Civic Engagement <i>UVic Outcomes VII, VIII, IX, X</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Understanding and appreciation of cultural and human differences b. Global perspective c. Social responsibility d. Sense of civic responsibility
6. Practical Competence <i>UVic Outcomes III, VI, X, XI</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Pursuing goals b. Communicating effectively c. Technological competence d. Managing personal affairs e. Managing career development f. Demonstrating professionalism g. Maintaining health and wellness h. Living a purposeful and satisfying life

¹ <http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2014-09/CAL/TUofV/>

The Basics: Assessment of student learning

Learning is a key priority in the University of Victoria (UVic) vision and mission statements and strategic plan. It is essential in achieving the Student Affairs vision - *Together, we transform students' lives*.

- Assessment is a process of determining the degree to which the work we do and the learning experiences we provide for students meet the goals we have established.
- Three major types of assessment in post-secondary education are (1) student academic performance [the subject of the assessment is the student], (2) operational effectiveness [the subject is a process or service delivered by the institution, or a part of the institution], and (3) student learning [the subject is a learning experience].
- Both operational effectiveness and student learning are important, but they have very different methods of assessment.
- Assessments of operational effectiveness measure parameters like utilization, efficiency, productivity, student satisfaction, and outputs (such as the number of counselling visits, community service experiences, or stress management programs completed).
- Assessments of student learning measure what students learned—how they changed—because of their participation in learning experiences. These assessments use student learning outcomes to define (1) what group of students participated in the learning experience, (2) what the learning experience was, (3) what the intended result of the learning experience was—what students become able to do because of their participation in the experience, and (4) what evidence would be required to show that the intended result had been achieved. The more specifically stated the learning outcome is, the better; it is easier to assess very specific outcomes associated with very specific learning experiences for very specific groups of students (what students, what will be done, how that will happen, when it will occur, etc.).
- Learning outcomes are categorized in various ways by professional organizations and universities, but there are fundamental common themes across the various ways of categorizing them: (1) knowledge acquisition and application; (2) cognitive skills, such as critical thinking; (3) preparation for work and life; (4) personal and inter-personal (social) development; and (5) civic engagement and participation—often called social responsibility.
- The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) offers 44 standards for functional areas in student academic and personal support services and has listed 6 student learning outcomes: (1) knowledge, (2) cognitive complexity, (3) intra-personal development, (4) interpersonal competence, (5) humanitarianism and civic engagement, and (6) practical competence. UVic Student Affairs has chosen to use the CAS Standards as guides for assessing and improving programs and services and to use the CAS learning outcomes as the Division's learning outcomes.
- The CAS learning outcomes are aligned with the university's institution-wide learning outcomes, which fall into two broad groups: (1) intellectual, academic and practical skills, and (2) personal and social responsibility capacities.
- Assessment of students' achievement of desired learning outcomes is intended to provide essential data with which to improve learning experiences. Assessment of learning outcomes is not testing or grading students. Finding out what they did, and did not, learn from learning experiences makes it possible to improve those experiences—but the purpose is not to evaluate the students.
- Learning outcomes can be assessed by qualitative (observation, students' writing or performances, journals) or quantitative (surveys) methods. Qualitative assessments often require rubrics to ensure consistency
- Assessment data are used to “close the loop”: the results suggest action steps to be taken to improve learning experiences or programs. An action step is an activity undertaken to make the results better.

SECTION TWO



WRITING STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Basics: Writing student learning outcomes

Question	Examples
1. What is the learning experience? That is, what activity, program, service, curriculum, course or intentional experience provides the opportunity for learning to occur?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A workshop on men's health offered by Health Services • An appointment with an academic advisor intended to help students identify four main components of a UVic degree • An honours course on ethics in the workplace co-taught by a professor in humanities and a chaplain in Multifaith Services • A Vikes intramural leadership experience • A series of individual personal counselling visits
2. What group of students will participate in the learning experience?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entering first-time-in-university students • Students who also work as university employees in certain areas • Students who are preparing for or have returned from studying abroad • Graduating seniors
3. What new capacity is being sought?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to invest in positive interpersonal relationships • Increased control in regard to choosing and declaring a major course of study • Ability to consider how personal decisions in the workplace are informed by one's sense of ethics • Ability to explain one's skills to a potential employer • Ability to identify, describe, explain, or demonstrate leadership skills
4. How will the achievement of that capacity be demonstrated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify (or describe, or explain) characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships • Identify personal triggers to stress or anxiety • Explain how career interests and personality type are interrelated • Describe how a study abroad experience better prepares for workplace success • Discuss how drive for success can influence ethical decision-making
5. Through what medium (or by what method) will students demonstrate new capacity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A one-page post-workshop reflection paper • A brief interview • Observed behavior or performance • A class presentation that is peer-evaluated with peers using a rubric • A blog or vlog that, using predetermined criteria, documents the lessons learned during the leadership experience (e.g., the lessons learned by leadership students representing UVic to prospective students)
6. What range of achievement satisfies the desired outcome?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name 4 out of 5 predetermined characteristics of the relevant concept (e.g., healthy relationships, ethics, etc) • Complete with 80% accuracy the development of a large-event organization checklist • Demonstrate at least 2 out of 3 desired leadership characteristics
7. What, if any external requirements, guidelines or standards apply?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council for Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) standards • Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) guidelines • SCUBA training certification requirements

Ten tips for writing student learning outcomes that work

1. **Start by asking:** What should students know, be able to do, or be able to demonstrate, when they have completed the learning experience I have designed - my program/activity/course/project?
 - ◇ If you can't answer this question, you can't establish a learning outcome.

2. **Things will go better** if there is a **common format** for student learning outcomes across the division; reaching consensus about the default format is an important early step.
 - ◇ Suggested: students will be able to...
 - ... identify the most appropriate policy or procedure that pertains to their university concerns
 - ... identify the most appropriate office, person, or resource related to their university concerns
 - ... articulate research ideas in an oral presentation format

3. **Clearly differentiate student learning outcomes** (which are measures of achievement) from **assessment of student satisfaction, program evaluation, and purely process measures** (such as taking attendance). Process measures are important, too (they measure effectiveness); we just do not want to confuse them with outcomes.
 - ◇ These are not learning outcomes:
 - Engage in events that promote the appreciation and respect of cultures represented in the campus community
 - Attend at least three evening programs sponsored by First Peoples House staff
 - Rate the guest speaker on sexual assault at least 4 on a 5-point scale
 - ◇ If possible, collect these two very different kinds of data on different instruments, at different times, or in different ways
 - ◇ Especially: don't collect student self-assessments of learning outcomes immediately after asking them to rate or evaluate programs; salience effects may materially undermine the quality of the results

4. **Focus** on a smaller number of high priority outcomes
 - ◇ The division or a department/unit may have a large catalogue of student learning outcomes in which it is interested—but it is difficult, and often wasteful, to try to assess all of the outcomes in the catalogue every year
 - ◇ The process of setting priorities among learning outcomes is itself valuable
 - ◇ Thinking through exactly what outcome is desired may produce consistency among departments, and better data for the division
 - Demonstrate knowledge of issues related to diversity locally, regionally, and nationally
 - Articulate awareness of specific social issues in the local area
 - Articulate a sense of the local issues related to diversity
 - ◇ Attending to a smaller number of outcomes will lower the burden of assessment and record-keeping on both students and staff

Continued... Ten tips for writing student learning outcomes that work

5. **When developing learning outcomes**, locate them in broad categories (domains and sub-domains), and link them to overarching institutional priorities/outcomes (e.g., university-wide learning outcomes.)

- ◇ Don't just list all the domains that a department thinks its work addresses and all the outcomes it thinks it produces; associate each outcome with specific domains and subdomains:
 - *Does not work*: Gain self awareness of personal abilities, develop skills to be successful in work environment, utilize creative problem solving and critical thinking... all listed as associated with **cognitive** and **interpersonal** outcome domains.
- ◇ All of the domains should be associated with university-wide outcomes
- ◇ After writing outcomes, review them for assignment to the proper domains/subdomains:
 - *Does not work*: Develop an "individual quality of work" standard consistent with Student Affairs' mission and philosophy...listed as associated with **cognitive** domain
 - *Works*: Ability to work as a team member...listed as associated with **interpersonal** domain
 - *Works*: Effectively articulate a conflict management plan listed as associated with **interpersonal competence**

6. **Make student learning outcomes as specific, focused, and clear as possible**; vague, general, or blurry outcomes are difficult to assess and unconvincing when described.

- ◇ The less specific an outcome is, the harder it will be to measure:

Example 1:

Very hard to assess Students will have more confidence in their abilities.

Hard to assess..... Demonstrate critical thinking skills, such as problem analysis, judgment and decision-making as they relate to social issues.

Easier to assess Students will demonstrate the ability to analyze and respond to arguments about racial discrimination during a discussion with other students.

Example 2:

Hard to assess..... Develop problem-solving skills and conflict resolution skills.

Easier to assess Residence Services staff will be able to assist roommates in resolving conflicts by helping them negotiate roommate agreements.

Example 3:

Hard to assess..... Value exercise as a stress reduction tool.

Easier to assess Will be able to explain how exercise affects stress.

- ◇ Putting too much into an outcome also makes it hard to assess:
 - EXAMPLE: Identify and articulate how stereotypes impact potential interactions, dialogues, and exchanges among different gender, class, race, and ethnicity, language, nationality, sexual orientation, age, religion, spirituality or disability.
- ◇ Domains and sub-domains can be less specific, because they are comprised of many very specific outcomes.

Continued... Ten tips for writing student learning outcomes that work

7. On the other hand: excessively customized and personalized outcomes are hard to generalize and measure

- ◇ Don't equate personal goal-setting with establishing learning outcomes:
 - Personal goal: ...able to participate in physical activities at least 3 days per week
 - Learning outcome: ...able to establish a personal exercise program consistent with current professional guidelines.

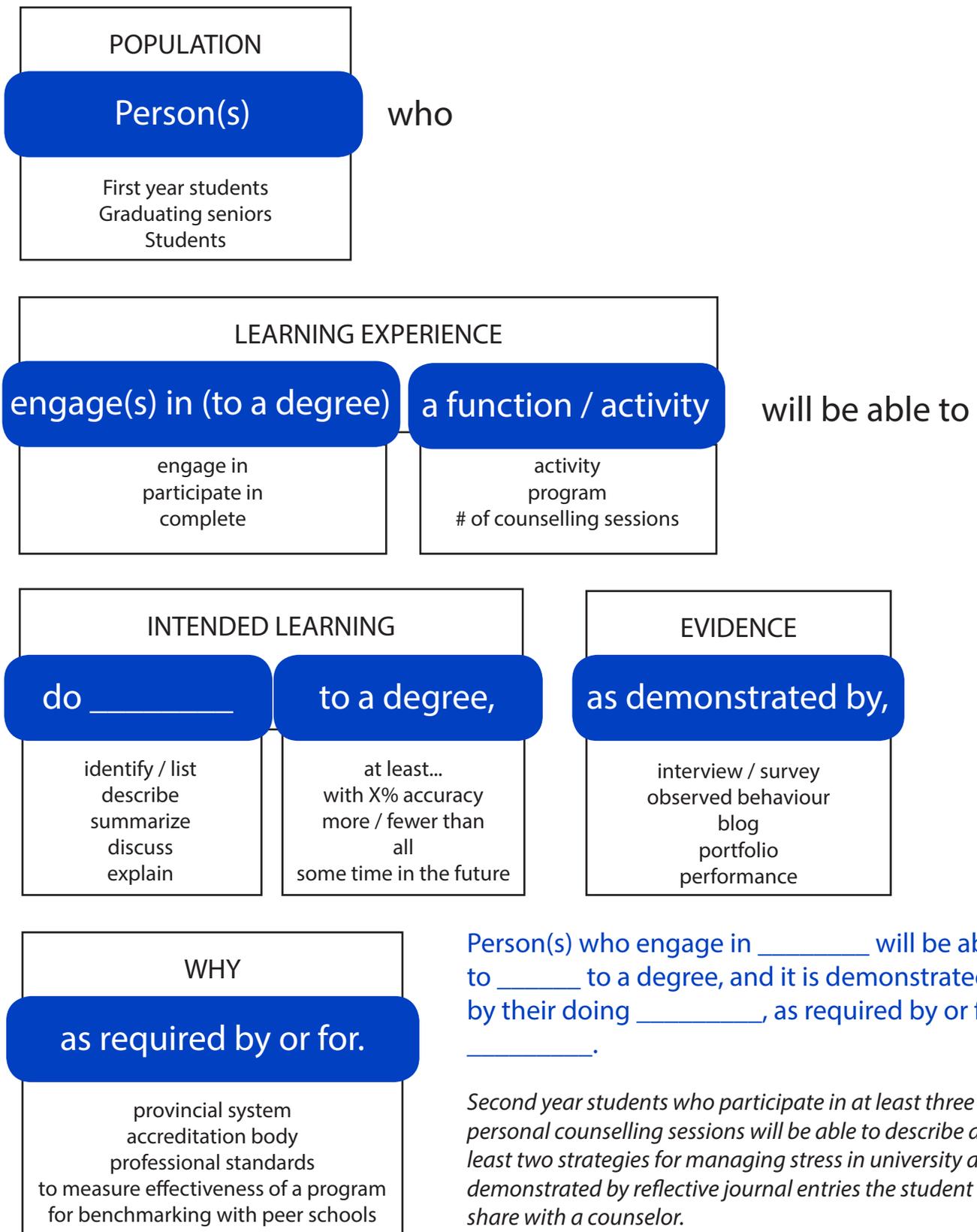
8. Don't establish outcomes that cannot be evaluated

- ◇ Outcomes that are hard to evaluate often are too broad and general
 - ...will be able to connect to the University community
 - ...will be able to approach problems more constructively
 - ...will be able to use effective coping skills
 - ...will learn about the ethical behaviors expected during the job search in areas such as resume development, interviewing, and accepting job offers
 - ...will develop an appreciation for diversity
 - ...will demonstrate an ability to navigate various aspects of the adult world including reporting a belief in the ability to achieve academic and life goals
 - ...demonstrate skills which are transferable to graduate school and their career plans
- ◇ Corollary: don't use terminology that makes a solid outcome difficult to evaluate
 - *Hard to evaluate:* Able to understand the skills needed for academic success.
 - *Easier to evaluate:* Students will be able to identify their own needs for assistance in writing by self-referring to...
 - *Hard to evaluate:* ...will be able to apply disseminated information in a future career, locate them in broad categories (domains and sub-domains), and link them to overarching institutional priorities/outcomes (e.g., University-wide learning outcomes.)

9. When creating learning outcomes, build in the basic methods of assessment; actively consider how you will evaluate achievement.

10. Specify the level, or audience, for each outcome; some learning outcomes make sense when applied to first year student, but not to seniors, for example.

Quick Guide: Format for writing student learning outcomes



Sample student learning outcomes

- ◇ Students participating in Vikes recreation intramurals will be able to identify strategies for collaborating with peers as demonstrated by a survey conducted at the close of the semester.
- ◇ Indigenous students who participate in Talking Circles will increase their effectiveness in communicating and sharing their experiences with one another as noted by feedback from an Elder, Indigenous Counsellor or peers in the group.
- ◇ Students who participate in orientation initiatives through Student Recruitment will be able to explain at least two ways to prevent sexual assault as demonstrated in random post-orientation interviews.
- ◇ Students employed in Residence Services will develop transferable workplace and career skills as demonstrated by skills reviews conducted at regular check-ins with their supervisor.
- ◇ Students who complete a workshop on stress management will be able to articulate a personal plan for anticipating and reducing of stress on their academic functioning as demonstrated in conversation with a counselor.

SECTION THREE 

ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Basics: Assessing student learning outcomes

Assessment is a process of collecting information (data) to document what is or what happened. In relation to student learning outcomes, the assessment component is a process of determining the extent to which students achieved the desired outcomes— which is necessary to deciding whether the learning experiences we provided for them were effective.

It is not a grading system and an assessment report is not like a school report card. Assessment is an organic part of the work of each department or unit; it is one major way in which we gather essential feedback about the effectiveness of programs, services, and activities. Assessment supports quality improvement and strategic planning.

Just as student learning outcomes are derived from the vision and values of a department, rather than from the functional processes of that department, assessment of student learning outcomes focuses on the effectiveness of programs, services, and activities in supporting student learning, rather than on whether, how, or in what way those programs, services, or activities occurred.

Table I below illustrates the differences between student learning outcomes and performance evaluation and suggests the role of assessment in each.

Table I | Student Learning Outcomes vs. Performance Metrics

Student Learning Outcomes	Performance Metrics Functional Indicators Operational Processes
Derived from vision and values <i>(institution, division, department/unit)</i>	Derived from description of the work of the department/unit <i>(programs, services, processes, activities)</i>
Measure contributions to student learning <i>(did students experience a transformative activity?)</i>	Measure performance of the work <i>(did students complete a task?)</i>
Achievement = Effectiveness <i>(were we effective in promoting student learning in this area? Can we show that students are somehow different as a result?)</i>	Achievement = Productivity, Satisfaction, or Accomplishment <i>(did we do what we said we would do? Did students come? Did they like it?)</i>
Require criteria to define levels of effectiveness	Require criteria to define levels of performance
Individual and collective feedback to shape department/unit programs and divisional activities and priorities	Individual feedback to shape department/unit systems
Assessment: How effective were our learning outcomes? <i>(Is the seaplane headed in the right direction? Are students learning something?)</i>	Assessment: How well did we perform our tasks? <i>(Is the seaplane on time? Are students satisfied with our programs and services?)</i>

Assessment at the right level

An early challenge faced by every Student Affairs division that begins to assess student learning is to “work at the right level” — to do learning assessments that have a high degree of specificity and reliability along with the necessary feasibility and practicality.

It’s best to focus initial assessments of learning at the level of a specific activity — a particular, individual, well-defined learning experience. The more specific and precisely described, the better; the more detailed and clear the learning outcome, the easier it will be to assess it, and the fewer uncertainties there will be when interpreting the assessment results.

Work at the Right Level
Institutional / University
Divisional
Departmental
Program
Specific Learning Activity

Think of an activity as a very specific learning event that has a clearly defined intended outcome. Examples of such events may be Vikes Nation ambassadors engaging with a guest speaker’s presentation on leadership and teamwork, Indigenous students learning Coast Salish protocol prior to meeting with an INAF Elder, student employees participating in one particular bookstore training on customer service, or students interacting with a representative in the Office of the Registrar to request a transcript.

These activities are not the only learning experiences within a program; a program usually includes several (or many) activities designed to achieve its goals—and a complex department may offer several different programs. Student counselling, for example, might include individual counselling/psychotherapy (a program), group counselling (another program), and outreach services (a third program). Each program might include several different activities —stress management, healthy relationships, and personal resiliency might all be specific activities within the outreach program.

A program then consists of numerous activities or events; it is the next level “up” from an activity or event. Programs may be complex, and their complexity may make it hard to assess the learning they intend to produce directly. But programs should also have clearly defined outcomes—which may often be assessed by aggregating the assessments of the activities within the program. Using our earlier example, it would be hard to assess the learning outcomes of the outreach program provided by the Counselling Center because there are several different activities, and different students might participate in them, and the activities might be offered at very different times, with different purposes. Better results always come from activity-level learning assessments.

Components of assessment

The first step in assessment is to determine with as much precision as possible what, exactly, is being assessed—that is, against precisely what desired outcome is achievement being measured?

Review the learning outcomes you have developed and chosen to assess in the coming academic year.

For each outcome, please note:

- ◇ Target group: all students, or some demographic, institutional, or functional sub-set of students.
 - Examples: all first time entering first year students, all students who participated in a certain activity, or students who had counseling intakes during the first semester.
- ◇ Note exactly how the capacity desired is described in the outcome. As precisely as possible, note what it is that students will learn to do, or know, if they achieve this outcome.
- ◇ Note what action a student must take to demonstrate achievement of the outcome
 - E.g., describe or explain something, exhibit a certain behavior, complete a task.
- ◇ Note what modifiers apply to the desired capacity—e.g., a certain minimum number of examples that must be given.
- ◇ Note any externalities that apply—such as guidelines from a professional organization—that will affect assessment against the outcome. This may be an area to align with a particular CAS Standard.

The next step is to figure out what the process of assessment will be, and how it will be accomplished.

Table II provides a list of the components that should be accounted for and addressed in planning the assessment process.

Table II | Assessment Plan Components

Who is / are the assessor(s)?	<p>Who is competent, capable, and appropriate to observe achievement against the outcome?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department/unit professional staff • Department/unit support staff • Student employees • Students themselves • Faculty members • Employer • Parent
What exactly will be assessed?	Determined by comprehensive review of the learning outcome, as described above

Table continued on next page

How will achievement be assessed?	<p>What method will be used to measure and document achievement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre/post survey (knowledge gain) • Post/pre survey (attitudes, beliefs) • Post survey (student self-assessment) • Direct observation • Interview • Product (manuscript, dairy, journal, work of art, performance...) • Indicators (things that would not change absent a change in the process)
What criteria will be used to determine achievement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfaction of mandated requirement • Number of examples, etc., given • Ability to “hit” some minimum number of key points in a require description, explanation (such as explaining the purpose of a major Student Affairs program on campus) • Observed performance of certain actions or statements
Which, and how many, students will be assessed?	<p>Not so much about the demographic issues as how many students must be assessed over what period(s) of time? How many students must be assessed to meet the need? To get that number, what should be the frequency and range of the assessment process?</p>
When to do the assessment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which month, semester, academic year • What day(s) of the week • What time(s) of day?
Where to do the assessment?	<p>Given the method chosen, timing of the assessment, and choice of students to be assessed, where should the assessment be done? How will privacy be protected?</p>
What technology will be needed?	<p>Will the assessment require any specialized technology?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email surveys • Students “fill out” form/assessment instrument on personal digital assistant • Web survey • Recording of meeting or interviews
How will the results be recorded?	<p>If the method is not a survey or other form for students to complete, how will the results be recorded and archived?</p>
How will the results be verified?	<p>Will students be provided a preliminary report of the findings and invited to review them and evaluate their authenticity?</p>
How will the results be reported?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal report • Summary in a document • PowerPoint presentation • Spreadsheet
What resources will be required?	<p>Can the assessment be accomplished as planned within the usual budget, by usual staff members, during regular hours—or must the assessment plan include a request for additional resources? Would it be helpful to have partners?</p>
Review	<p>Final review of the assessment plan to eliminate ambiguities and confusion.</p>

Blank sample assessment plan form

Table III | Sample Form for Student Learning Outcome Assessment Plan

Student learning outcome	
Who is/are the assessor(s)?	
Student Learning Outcome review: What will be assessed?	
Methods: How will achievement be assessed?	
Assessment criteria	
Which, and how many, students will be assessed?	
When will the assessment be done?	
Where will the assessment be done?	
What technology will be needed?	
How will the results be recorded?	
How will the results be verified?	
How will the results be reported?	
What resources will be required?	
Review	

Completed sample assessment plan form

Table IV | Sample Student Learning Outcome Assessment Plan

Student learning outcome	Student residents will have their doors locked on 65% of routine inspections
Who is/are the assessor(s)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residence Life Coordinators (RLCs)? • Senior Community Leaders (SCLs) or Community Leaders (CLs)?
SLO review: What will be assessed?	Whether doors in residences were locked when tested by assessors
Methods: How will achievement be assessed?	Door-to-door testing of door locks
Assessment criteria	Whether or not door is locked
Which, and how many, students will be assessed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All rooms in all residences • Even numbered rooms in (all) (some) residences • All rooms in residences in which thefts have been reported
When will the assessment be done?	Between 2 and 5 PM Mondays and Thursdays during four weeks of the fall semester
Where will the assessment be done?	In residences
What technology will be needed?	None
How will the results be recorded?	Check off results on form/grid
How will the results be verified?	Review preliminary results with small group of students living in residence
How will the results be reported?	Written summary of results—number of locked doors/number of doors
What resources will be required?	None
Review	Done

Blank sample assessment rubrics

Sample Assessment Rubric I

	Capstone 4	Milestones 3 2		Benchmark 1
Criterion 1:				
Criterion 2:				
Criterion 3:				
Criterion 4:				
Criterion 5:				

With this rubric, you can assign a zero to any criterion where the student does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

Sample Assessment Rubric II

	Unsatisfactory (1)	Developing (2)	Basic (3)	Proficient (4)	Exemplary (5)
Criterion 1:					
Criterion 2:					
Criterion 3:					
Criterion 4:					

Rubrics can be set up in a variety of ways using any scale. Feel free to choose one or develop your own that works with the student learning outcome you are assessing.

Sample values assessment rubric: Civic Engagement

The following framing language, definition and rubric is from the Association of American Colleges and Universities' values assessment rubrics. More values assessment rubrics are available for download from the Student Affairs website, details in the resources section of the Appendix.

This VALUES rubrics were developed by teams of faculty experts representing colleges and universities across the United States through a process that examined many existing campus rubrics and related documents for each learning outcome and incorporated additional feedback from faculty. The rubrics articulate fundamental criteria for each learning outcome, with performance descriptors demonstrating progressively more sophisticated levels of attainment. The rubrics are intended for institutional-level use in evaluating and discussing student learning, not for grading. The core expectations articulated in all 15 of the VALUE rubrics can and should be translated into the language of individual campuses, disciplines, and even courses. The utility of the VALUE rubrics is to position learning at all undergraduate levels within a basic framework of expectations such that evidence of learning can be shared nationally through a common dialog and understanding of student success.

Framing Language: Preparing graduates for their public lives as citizens, members of communities, and professionals in society has historically been a responsibility of higher education. Yet the outcome of a civic-minded graduate is a complex concept. Civic learning outcomes are framed by personal identity and commitments, disciplinary frameworks and traditions, pre-professional norms and practice, and the mission and values of colleges and universities. This rubric is designed to make the civic learning outcomes more explicit. Civic engagement can take many forms, from individual volunteerism to organizational involvement to electoral participation. For students this could include community-based learning through service-learning classes, community-based research, or service within the community. Multiple types of work samples or collections of work may be utilized to assess this, such as:

- ◇ The student creates and manages a service program that engages others (such as youth or members of a neighborhood) in learning about and taking action on an issue they care about. In the process, the student also teaches and models processes that engage others in deliberative democracy, in having a voice, participating in democratic processes, and taking specific actions to affect an issue.
- ◇ The student researches, organizes, and carries out a deliberative democracy forum on a particular issue, one that includes multiple perspectives on that issue and how best to make positive change through various courses of public action. As a result, other students, faculty, and community members are engaged to take action on an issue.
- ◇ The student works on and takes a leadership role in a complex campaign to bring about tangible changes in the public's awareness or education on a particular issue, or even a change in public policy. Through this process, the student demonstrates multiple types of civic action and skills.
- ◇ The student integrates their academic work with community engagement, producing a tangible product (piece of legislation or policy, a business, building or civic infrastructure, water quality or scientific assessment, needs survey, research paper, service program, or organization) that has engaged community constituents and responded to community needs and assets through the process.

Continued... Sample values assessment rubric: Civic Engagement

Definition: Civic engagement is “working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes.” (Excerpted from *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*, edited by Thomas Ehrlich, published by Oryx Press, 2000, Preface, page vi.) In addition, civic engagement encompasses actions wherein individuals participate in activities of personal and public concern that are both individually life enriching and socially beneficial to the community.

	Capstone 4	Milestone 3
Diversity of Communities and Cultures	Demonstrates evidence of adjustment in own attitudes and beliefs because of working within and learning from diversity of communities and cultures. Promotes others' engagement with diversity.	Reflects on how own attitudes and beliefs are different from those of other cultures and communities. Exhibits curiosity about what can be learned from diversity of communities and cultures.
Analysis of Knowledge	Connects and extends knowledge (facts, theories, etc.) from one's own academic study/field/discipline to civic engagement and to one's own participation in civic life, politics, and government.	Analyzes knowledge (facts, theories, etc.) from one's own academic study/field/discipline making relevant connections to civic engagement and to one's own participation in civic life, politics, and government.
Civic Identity and Commitment	Provides evidence of experience in civic-engagement activities and describes what she/he has learned about her or himself as it relates to a reinforced and clarified sense of civic identity and continued commitment to public action.	Provides evidence of experience in civic-engagement activities and describes what she/he has learned about her or himself as it relates to a growing sense of civic identity and commitment.
Civic Communication	Tailors communication strategies to effectively express, listen, and adapt to others to establish relationships to further civic action	Effectively communicates in civic context, showing ability to do all of the following: express, listen, and adapt ideas and messages based on others' perspectives.
Civic Action and Reflection	Demonstrates independent experience and shows initiative in team leadership of complex or multiple civic engagement activities, accompanied by reflective insights or analysis about the aims and accomplishments of one's actions.	Demonstrates independent experience and team leadership of civic action, with reflective insights or analysis about the aims and accomplishments of one's actions.
Civic Contexts/ Structures	Demonstrates ability and commitment to collaboratively work across and within community contexts and structures to achieve a civic aim.	Demonstrates ability and commitment to work actively within community contexts and structures to achieve a civic aim.

Milestone 2	Benchmark 1
Has awareness that own attitudes and beliefs are different from those of other cultures and communities. Exhibits little curiosity about what can be learned from diversity of communities and cultures.	Expresses attitudes and beliefs as an individual, from a one-sided view. Is indifferent or resistant to what can be learned from diversity of communities and cultures.
Begins to connect knowledge (facts, theories, etc.) from one's own academic study/field/discipline to civic engagement and to one's own participation in civic life, politics, and government.	Begins to identify knowledge (facts, theories, etc.) from one's own academic study/field/discipline that is relevant to civic engagement and to one's own participation in civic life, politics, and government.
Evidence suggests involvement in civic-engagement activities is generated from expectations or course requirements rather than from a sense of civic identity.	Provides little evidence of her/his experience in civic-engagement activities and does not connect experiences to civic identity.
Communicates in civic context, showing ability to do more than one of the following: express, listen, and adapt ideas and messages based on others' perspectives.	Communicates in civic context, showing ability to do one of the following: express, listen, and adapt ideas and messages based on others' perspectives.
Has clearly participated in civically focused actions and begins to reflect or describe how these actions may benefit individual(s) or communities.	Has experimented with some civic activities but shows little internalized understanding of their aims or effects and little commitment to future action.
Demonstrates experience identifying intentional ways to participate in civic contexts and structures.	Experiments with civic contexts and structures, tries out a few to see what fits.

SECTION FOUR 

APPENDIX

Bloom's taxonomy

Benjamin S. Bloom, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals* (New York: David McKay, 1956).

Bloom identified six levels within the cognitive domain, from the simple recall or recognition of facts, as the lowest level, through increasingly more complex and abstract mental levels, to the highest order which is classified as evaluation. A description of the six levels as well as verb examples that represent intellectual activity are listed here.

Knowledge is defined as remembering of previously learned material. This may involve the recall of a wide range of material, from specific facts to complete theories, but all that is required is the bringing to mind of the appropriate information. Knowledge represents the lowest level of learning outcomes in the cognitive domain.

Verbs: arrange, define, duplicate, label, list, memorize, name, order, recognize, relate, recall, repeat, reproduce state.

Comprehension is defined as the ability to grasp the meaning of material. This may be shown by translating material from one form to another (words to numbers), by interpreting material (explaining or summarizing), and by estimating future trends (predicting consequences or effects). These learning outcomes go one step beyond the simple remembering of material, and represent the lowest level of understanding.

Verbs: classify, describe, discuss, explain, express, identify, indicate, locate, recognize, report, restate, review, select, translate.

Application refers to the ability to use learned material in new and concrete situations. This may include the application of such things as rules, methods, concepts, principles, laws, and theories. Learning outcomes in this area require a higher level of understanding than those under comprehension.

Verbs: apply, choose, demonstrate, dramatize, employ, illustrate, interpret, operate, practice, schedule, sketch, solve, use, write.

Analysis refers to the ability to break down material into its component parts so that its organizational structure may be understood. This may include the identification of the parts, analysis of the relationships between parts, and recognition of the organizational principles involved. Learning outcomes here represent a higher intellectual level than comprehension and application because they require an understanding of both the content and the structural form of the material.

Verbs: analyze, appraise, calculate, categorize, compare, contrast, criticize, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, examine, experiment, question, test.

Synthesis refers to the ability to put parts together to form a new whole. This may involve the production of a unique communication (theme or speech), a plan of operations (research proposal), or a set of abstract relations (scheme for classifying information). Learning outcomes in this area stress creative behaviors, with major emphasis on the formulation of new patterns or structures.

Verbs: arrange, assemble, collect, compose, construct, create, design, develop, formulate, manage, organize, plan, prepare, propose, set up, write.

Evaluation is concerned with the ability to judge the value of material (statement, novel, poem, research report) for a given purpose. The judgments are to be based on definite criteria. These may be internal criteria (organization) or external criteria (relevance to the purpose) and the student may determine the criteria or be given them. Learning outcomes in this area are highest in the cognitive hierarchy because they contain elements of all the other categories, plus conscious value judgments based on clearly defined criteria.

Verbs: appraise, argue, assess, attach, choose compare, defend estimate, judge, predict, rate, core, select, support, value, evaluate.

Verbs that express learning outcomes or competencies

Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
arrange	characterize	administer	analyze	combine	appraise
define	classify	apply	appraise	compose	argue
duplicate	complete	calculate	categorize	consolidate	assess
know	depict	choose	compare	construct	critique
label	describe	compute	contrast	create	defend
list	discuss	conduct	critique	design	envision
match	establish	demonstrate	diagram	formulate	estimate
memorize	explain	dramatize	differentiate	hypothesize	evaluate
name	express	employ	discriminate	integrate	examine
order	identify	implement	distinguish	merge	grade
quote	illustrate	interpret	examine	organize	inspect
recognize	locate	operate	experiment	plan	judge
recall	recognize	perform	explore	propose	justify
repeat	report	practice	inventory	synthesize	rank
reproduce	relate	prescribe	investigate	systematize	rate
restate	review	roleplay	question	theorize	review
retain	sort	sketch	research	unite	value
	translate	solve	test	write	

Additional print and online resources

Additional Reading

Mitstifer, D.I. (Ed.). (2012). *CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education* (8th Edition). Washington, DC: Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education.

Keeling, R.P, Wall, A.F., Underhile, R. & Dungey, G.J. (2008). *Assessment Reconsidered: Institutional Effectiveness for Student Success*. Published: International Centre for Student Success and Institutional Accountability.

Keeling, R.P. (Ed.). (2006). *Learning Reconsidered 2: A Practical Guide to Implementing a Campus-Wide Focus on the Student Experience*. Published: ACPA, ACUHO-I, ACUI, NACA, NACADA, NASPA, & NIRSA.

Online Resources

UVic Student Affairs, CAS Standards Resources - www.uvic.ca/studentaffairs/initiatives/cas-standards

UVic Learning & Teaching Centre - www.uvic.ca/learningandteaching/leaders/home/curriculum

Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education - www.cas.edu

Keeling and Associates - www.keelingassociates.com

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