Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are the specific knowledge, skills, or abilities that students should be able to demonstrate or perform at the end of the program. The outcomes can be focused on cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills. SLOs are clear statements that describe an observable behavior. SLOs are always expressed in terms of the student.

A well-written SLO includes a concrete action verb that conveys the appropriate level of learning.

This can be accomplished by using Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy¹, whose levels are:

I. Remembering (action verbs include: arrange, define, describe, select, state)
II. Understanding (action verbs include: explain, summarize, give examples, paraphrase)
III. Applying (action verbs include: demonstrate, apply, predict, produce, write)
IV. Analyzing (action verbs include: interpret, analyze, compare, manipulate, solve)
V. Evaluating (action verbs include: critique, justify, evaluate, defend, rate, argue)
VI. Creating (action verbs include: create, design, formulate, generate, synthesize)

This can also be accomplished by using Dee Fink’s Taxonomy², whose levels are:

I. Foundational Knowledge – understanding and remembering information and ideas (action verbs include: explain, associate, describe, summarize, give examples, paraphrase)
II. Application – skills; critical, creative, and practical thinking; management projects (action verbs include: analyze, assess, critique, coordinate, create, imagine, solve, use)
III. Integration – Connecting ideas, people, realms of life (action verbs include: associate, connect, correlate, contrast, differentiate, relate, link, synthesize)
IV. Human Dimensions - Learning about oneself and others (action verbs include: advocate, communicate, collaborate, lead, promote, reflect, empathize)
V. Caring – Developing new feelings, interests, and values (action verbs include: develop, express, discover, interpret, recognize, value, reflect, share)
VI. Learning to Learn – Becoming a better learner, inquiring about a subject, becoming self-directing learners (action verbs include: construct knowledge, critique, develop a learning plan, self-assess, generalize knowledge, formulate, frame questions, predict performance, analyze)

Creating an Assessment-for-Student-Learning-Improvement Plan and Report

How to Develop Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes should address the following questions:
1. What level of learning (Blooms action verb) is taking place?
2. What knowledge, skill, or ability should students demonstrate at the end of the program?

Meets Standard Criteria on Academic Assessment Rubric:
☑ Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) use concrete action verbs (e.g. Bloom’s Taxonomy) to indicate the specific behavior that will be performed; SLOs are focused on student learning; at least 3 but no more than 15 SLOs are identified.

Just Getting Started? Here’s a template to follow

Students will be able to [1. action verb] [2. specific knowledge, skill, or ability] to [person, place, or thing].

Examples

Example 1: Written communication for an undergraduate program
Students will be able to [1] write [2] an essay with clearly stated objectives, showing logical consistency and reasonable freedom from mechanical errors.

Example 2: Theoretical knowledge for a graduate program
Students will be able to [1] apply [2] theories of crime and criminal justice to research and public policies.

Example 3: Methodologies for a certificate program
Students will be able to [1] choose [2] methods to promote the sustainability of health programs.

For more information, please contact the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment

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